

Yesterday and Today

1917-1967

Contemporaries Report
on the Progress
of German-Soviet Friendship



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Preface

Our publication was prepared jointly by Verlag Zeit im Bild in the German Democratic Republic and the Publishing House of the Novosti Press Agency in the Soviet Union. It is a document which reports on the history of German-Soviet relations from the 1917 Great October Socialist Revolution up to the present. The contributions published were written at various times in the course of the last half century. Their authors are not silent observers standing aside from the happenings but active participants in the shaping of important events. This book therefore rightly has a documentary significance. As a collection, the contributions represent a broad panorama and bear witness to the historically important development of a friendship.

Fraternal and indestructible relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union have arisen out of the immortal deeds of the defenders and champions of Soviet-German friendship. This serves the welfare of the present and coming generations of the peoples of the USSR and the GDR; it is an important contribution to the maintenance of peace in Europe and throughout the world and thus benefits all peace-loving people.

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Storming the Fortresses
of the Old World I

Under Spartacus the slaves rebelled against their tormentors, but they were defeated. In Germany the peasants gathered around Thomas Müntzer and stormed the castles of the feudal lords but they, too, were defeated. In England the people, led by John Lilburne and Winstanley, fought for their freedom, but they were deceived. And the Paris Commune also died with the last heroically fighting communards on the Père Lachaise cemetery on 28 May 1871.

Forty-six years later the workers and peasants of Russia stormed the strongholds of their oppressors. For the first time in the thousands of years of the history of mankind a people rose up for its freedom and independence—and maintained its victory! The Russian people were poor, uneducated and half-starved, but they were able to win power because they followed the party of Lenin which led them in accordance with the laws of development of human society.

The author of the following contribution, A. Belyshev, was a member of the crew of the Russian cruiser Aurora. He was a witness of, and participant in the historic days of October 1917 in the Petrograd of that time.

The Shot from the Aurora

I served as a machinist on the Aurora. It had been operating as a patrol ship on the Baltic Sea for two years, but in November 1916 it had tied up at the wharf of the French-Russian shipyard for repairs.

The country was in a state of gloomy ferment. In February 1917 the enterprises in Petrograd were on strike, among them the French-Russian shipyard. The shipyard grounds were occupied by a mixed battalion placed under the commander of the Aurora.

On 26 February an escort brought three arrested persons in soldiers' cloaks on board the cruiser. This news spread over the whole ship and caused general indignation. The machinists met in a low tunnel of the rudder shaft which was lit only by a dim candle, and decided to save the arrested men. The following plan was made: At nine o'clock sharp the entire crew assembled as usual on the deck where church services were held with the officers in the lead for evening prayers. As soon as the ship's chaplain spoke the words "And give us your blessings" the electrician was to switch off the light, and under the cover of darkness we intended to rescue the arrested men.

This was decided upon. But half an hour before the beginning of prayers the officers made the rounds of all quarters, then lined up in a group on the quarterdeck, and the

escort brought the three prisoners in their soldiers' cloaks to the gangway which led ashore. We looked around feverishly—something had to happen—now—at once—before it was too late.

And with an outcry a handful of stokers, sailors and machinists rushed to the gangway. The officers standing around the commander drew their pistols and shot. I took cover behind a gun. Osipenko remained lying, Fokin jumped onto the ice from a height of five metres. Vlasenko was wounded in the leg.

The bugle sounded on the cruiser and called the crew together. They fell in on deck in units. The gunners stood at their machine-guns ready to open fire. The lower decks were searched. It was already getting dark. There was a sinister silence.

"Shurka," Vlasenko whispered, "my leg is bleeding, I can't stand any longer."

"Bear it," I whispered to him in a low voice.

We stood in silence. I supported Vlasenko with my shoulder; he was thoroughly weakened from the pain. The searching of the lower decks continued. The commander of the cruiser appeared on deck, accompanied by the oldest officer, passed us and lit up the pale faces of the machinists with his flashlight.

The restless night passed. Reveille sounded at daybreak. What was the commander planning to do? To start with he only gave the order: "The whole crew turns to, clean ship!" But events occurred one after another. Workers and soldiers rushed through the gates of the factories with red flags. The sailors hastened to the machine-guns which stood on the bridges, overcame them and seized the cruiser.

During my service in the navy I had maintained close relations with the workers of the Obukhodov works and received illegal literature from them which I hid among the steam conduits. In the very first days of the February Revolution I joined the party of the Bolsheviks. In March I was admitted to membership in the party, and after the July days I was elected chairman of the ship committee.

The crew of the cruiser were behind the Bolsheviks without reservation. It only sneered at the provisional government. "We do not obey the decrees of the provisional government and do not recognize its rule." These words of the Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet also expressed our thoughts and feelings. The provisional government sought a pretext to take possession of the rebellious Aurora, and it found one. The repairs were completed, and the government ordered a trial run in the open sea. The committee which was under the leadership of the Bolsheviks had a different opinion: "Machine trial run on 25 October."

Petrograd was filled with unrest in those days. A decision had to be made. Armed

revolt was being intensively prepared everywhere. On 23 October the Revolutionary War Committee of the Petrograd Soviet called the representatives of the Aurora to the Smolny.

I went there with Lukichev. We went up to the third floor, turned into the left wing, entered one of the rooms and put our rifles in the corner. A man with a pince-nez and a black, wavy beard whom we did not yet know sat at a table on which there was a large map of Petrograd.

"The Revolutionary War Committee has ordered us to Comrade Sverdlov," we explained.

"That's me. Take a seat, comrades."

He questioned us in detail about the situation on the cruiser and wanted to know who really had authority on the Aurora.

"Belyshev," Lukichev replied. "He is chairman of our ship committee."

"Comrade sailors," Sverdlov said, "the Revolutionary War Committee has authorized me to appoint a commissar for the Aurora. I think that Comrade Belyshev is best suited for this post."

I replied briefly: "The decision of the Party is an order to me."

Thereupon Sverdlov took a mandate form, filled it out and handed it to me.

At noon the next day the entire crew assembled on one of the decks of the Aurora. Newspapers with exciting reports went from hand to hand: The district staff was trying to assemble the cadets and shock brigades from the vicinity. The editorial offices of the newspapers *Rabochi Putj* (Workers' Way) and *Soldat* (Soldier) were closed.

The men of the Aurora wanted to go into the city. I kept them back, admonished them to observe revolutionary discipline.

An extraordinary session of the ship committee was opened in the presence of the entire crew. I reported on the order of the Revolutionary War Committee to keep the ship ready for action.

"I have quite a different order," the commander said. "The district chairman has ordered all troop units and crews to remain in quarters. All unauthorized actions are to be stopped. The troops are categorically forbidden to obey the orders of any organizations."

The sailors began to whisper.

"Comrades!" I shouted above the noise. "I have just received a decree from the Central Committee of the Baltic Fleet. According to it the orders of the Revolutionary War Committee are to be obeyed unconditionally."

"Show me this decree," the commander demanded. I gave it to him. When he saw that it was directed to the commissar of the Aurora the commander roared: "What commissar? Strangers are forbidden to stay on board a warship!"

"I am the commissar. Here is my mandate. I direct your attention to the fact, citizen commander, that every order issued without my consent is invalid. The ship is to be kept ready for action!"

Tugs brought ammunition from Kronstadt. It was quickly stored in the hull. At midnight the Aurora was ready for action. The ship guards were doubled. Near the landing pier at the main entrance of the works patrols went back and forth on the Kalinkin Bridge. The following instruction came from the Smolny: "The Nikolayevsky Bridge which has been raised by the cadets is to be made passable by you with all means at your disposal."

It was decided to bring the cruiser near the bridge. I ordered that the boilers be heated and steam given. Then I went to the commander's cabin and declared that the Aurora had to be run to the Nikolayevsky Bridge. He sullenly replied that the Neva had not been cleared of mud within the city since the beginning of the war and that the Aurora would risk running aground.

Thereupon I went to the mess and told the officers that the Aurora would enter the Neva. But none of the officers agreed to it.

I went to the exit, turned to the officers and said sharply: "No one may go on deck!"

I placed reliable guards at the entrances to the mess and ordered that the portholes be closed with the steel covers. But how could I carry through the instructions of the Revolutionary War Committee?

The first helmsman Sergei Sakharov volunteered to examine the Neva channel with the hand sounding apparatus. He tied a belt with revolver bag to his sailor blouse, hung an accumulator lamp in front of his chest, a lamp which was covered with black paper and gave light only through a tiny slit, let himself down into a jollyboat and moved out into the dark night with the rowers. After half an hour Sakharov returned, climbed on board and gave me a slip of paper on which he had noted the depths of the channel. "The cruiser will get through," he reported to me.

With this scheme I again went to the commander. This time, too, he refused to steer the ship. I ordered the arrest of all officers and went to the pilot bridge together with Lipatov and Sakharov.

The engine-room telegraph sounded: "Half speed ahead!" In the pitch-dark night the cruiser moved out into the Neva.

The guard called to me: "The commander wants to talk to you!"

"Bring him to me!"

The commander came on to the bridge, downcast and humiliated.

"I cannot permit the Aurora to run aground. I want to steer the ship," he said without looking at me.

"Good, do so," I answered him.

At three o'clock in the morning we had reached the Nikolayevsky Bridge and dropped anchor. Our searchlights illuminated the bridge. It was true, one part of the bridge had been opened. Officer cadets who were guarding the bridge sought cover. The ship electricians rowed to the bank in a jollyboat and brought the slewing gear of the bridge into motion, so that the bridge closed again. Red Army soldiers and units streamed on to the bridge from Vasiliev island.

An autumn morning dawned. On the Neva warships approached from the direction of Kronstadt, tied up at the English quay and set armed sailors ashore. After a few hours the wireless station of the Aurora received the following historic information for the citizens of Russia: "The provisional government is overthrown . . ."

The noise of machine-guns and cannons resounded from the direction of the Winter Palace which was besieged by armed workers and soldiers. A jollyboat approached the Aurora. A runner from the Revolutionary War Committee brought information that the provisional government had been called upon to surrender by nine o'clock in the evening. If it should refuse a red fire would be kindled above the Peter Paul Fortress—as a signal for the Aurora to deliver a shot. This shot was to introduce the storming of the Winter Palace . . .

In the evening I went to the fo'c'sle of the cruiser where the gunners were on watch at a twelve-inch gun. The situation was coming to a head. The noise of fighting resounded from the bank. But the Peter Paul Fortress had not yet given a signal. The clock showed 9.30. Voices cried "fire, fire."

The flaming red signal rose up in the dense fog behind the bridge. It was 9.40. I gave the order: "Fire!" The thunder of our gun rolled across the Neva, the quays and the square in front of the Winter Palace. We listened! As a response many voices roared a tremendous "Hurrah!" Our comrades began to storm the Winter Palace. I ordered the recharging of the gun. And now it became silent.

A runner hurried to the bridge, waving a sailor's cap:

"Do not shoot any more! Our men are in the Winter Palace!"

"Hurrah, comrades! Long live Soviet power!"

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin was at the head of the armed uprising in Petrograd in October 1917 which became a beacon for the entire country.

The bourgeois provisional government headed by Kerensky (a traitorous government which arose after the bourgeois-democratic revolution in February 1917) was overthrown under his direct leadership. Lenin's activity in these historic hours has been put on record for ever by the Leningrad writer P. Kapitsa.

Lenin Comes to the Smolny

Lenin, hiding from Kerensky's sleuths, was living in secret quarters in a block of flats in the Vyborg District. Not even the members of the party Central Committee knew where he was. They communicated with him only through the Vyborg District Committee, where Krupskaya worked. Besides her, the contacts were the Finnish Communist Eino Rahja and the owner of the flat, Margarita Fofanova . . .

That morning was much like any other. Trams crawled out of the depot one after another and sped to the centre of the city. The bakeries and hairdressers' were open as usual. The usual queues by the food shops.

During the day Fofanova heard that Nikolayevsky Bridge had been swung open, and returning from work she had to make a big detour to get home. She arrived to find Lenin pacing the passage excitedly. He bombarded her with questions:

"Well, what's happening? Many soldiers about? What are the workers doing?"

Fofanova had seen some armed men about, but not many. They had not attacked anyone but merely stood guarding the bridges. No one had been able to tell her why and on whose orders the bridge had been opened.

"I wonder if you would keep your things on and deliver a letter for me," Lenin asked.

In that letter, addressed to the members of the Central Committee, he said:

"Comrades, I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal."

Once again he explained that they must not wait any longer, everything might be lost.

"Under no circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.

"History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be

victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.”

Fofanova went over to district party headquarters and delivered the letter. The Central Committee and the Revolutionary Military Committee were taking action, but Lenin was instructed not to leave his hiding-place.

When Fofanova returned, Lenin hurriedly wrote a very short but evidently sharply-worded note, for when Fofanova went over again and delivered it, an anxious Krupskaya came out of the meeting room:

“Is he very angry?”

“Very.”

“All the same, tell him that he mustn’t venture out yet, let him wait.”

This message, too, Fofanova delivered word for word.

“Go again!” Lenin insisted. “We must not wait, we may lose everything.”

Fofanova had been gone a long time when he finally heard the agreed knock on the door and opened it to find Eino Rahja outside. Lenin was delighted and questioned him eagerly about what was happening in the centre of the city.

But Rahja could not tell him very much, he was not a member of the Revolutionary Military Committee and did not have all the information. What he did say was that if Kerensky’s troops managed to open the bridges and occupy the approaches to them, the different working-class districts would be cut off from one another and that would of course make things easier for the enemy. Only in the Vyborg District was the situation clear: the Red Guard was in actual control. Here Kerensky was afraid to try anything. Everyone was solidly against him . . .

Lenin paced from corner to corner as he listened, thinking and frowning. Then he stopped and demanded:

“Would you be able to find someone at the Smolny that I have to see and bring him here?”

Rahja considered, then shook his head doubtfully:

“Hardly. I doubt whether the trams are running any more. That means footing it there and back, a matter of twelve versts. Think how long it would take, and you have to have passes, too. True, I’ve got a couple, but they’re too badly erased . . . they’d spot the fake.”

“You have two passes?” Lenin asked. “Splendid! Then you and I will go to the Smolny ourselves.”

Rahja attempted to dissuade him, but Lenin was adamant.

“No arguments, we’re going!”

He wrote a note for Fofanova and started getting ready. To go out without disguise was dangerous, and besides donning a wig he bound up his cheek as if he had a toothache and put on a battered old cap.

"Well, come along!" he said when it was all done. "Put out the light."

Rahja put out the lamp, and they went outside.

The streets were deserted, but a belated tram was rolling by on its way to the depot. Lenin ran after it and jumped on, with Rahja following suit.

At the corner of Botkinskaya and Nizhegorodskaya the tram turned off at the depot, and they had to get out and walk the rest of the way.

Liteiny Bridge was guarded at the near end by Vyborg District workers, and these let them through without any trouble. But at the far end stood cadets, and they demanded of everyone a pass from the military authorities.

Quite a crowd had gathered in front of them. People trying to get home cursed the cadets and the whole set-up and attempted to break through the cordon, and some succeeded.

Rahja took Lenin over to the far left and, seizing an opportune moment, propelled him forward and himself slipped past while the cadet was holding back the crowd on his other side.

When they had gone a good part of the way, two horsemen came galloping round the corner. They rode past at first, then realized there was someone there and pulled up. They were from the cadets gunnery school.

"You walk on," Rahja whispered. "I'll hold them up."

"Your pass!" the cadets demanded.

"Pass?" Rahja inquired innocently. "What pass? Where do you get it? What sort of new arrangements are these?"

Lenin meanwhile was getting further and further down the street.

There was no place for him to hide, the gates of all the houses turned out to be locked.

"Your pass, or else . . ." And the cadet swung his whip.

"Go ahead, hit me! Hit me if you're such a hero!" Rahja shouted drunkenly, and, reaching into the pocket where he had his revolver, he rushed defiantly at the horse.

The horse shied fearfully away.

"Leave him alone," said the other cadet. "No sense bothering with a drunk."

The first cadet cracked his whip in the air, headed his horse round and galloped off after his companion towards Liteiny.

Rahja all but ran to catch up with Lenin, whom he found walking calmly along.

"Fooled them neatly, didn't you," Lenin laughed.

At last Shpalernaya was behind them and the long Smolny building came into sight. All the windows blazed with light.

In the square before the building stood a three-inch gun, and soldiers with red arm-bands clustered round a fire nearby. There were armoured cars parked under the trees. Orders sounded and armed Red Guards bustled about.

Former "institute for daughters of the nobility", the Smolny rang with the stamping of hobnailed boots, the sound of loud voices, the metallic clanking of arms.

Pausing at the big landing of the staircase, Lenin sent Rahja to find where the leaders of the Revolutionary Military Committee were and sat down to wait on a bench in a dimly lit corridor.

Lenin finally got up and went back to the landing, just as Rahja, too, arrived there.

He led the way along a third-storey corridor to what used to be the instructresses' rooms.

The narrow hallway and large outer office of the Revolutionary Military Committee were blue with smoke. Armed men stood about or squatted on the floor waiting for orders. There was a smell of leather and damp wool.

Rahja took Lenin up to a door with a sentry in front of it.

"Orders are to admit him," he said.

The sentry opened the door without arguing.

Lenin took off his coat, tossed it on top of the other coats piled on a table, pulled the bandage from his face, and then said loudly: "Greetings!"

At the sound of the familiar voice they looked up and seemed unable to trust their eyes for a few seconds, then rushed with cries of joy to shake his hand.

On taking charge, Lenin first of all sent a party to clear Liteiny Bridge of the Kerensky patrols, then proceeded to verify the reports of the capture of the railway stations, the bridges and the post and telegraph offices. He insisted on having everything closely confirmed.

The government troops offered no serious resistance, though at the bridges and the telegraph office some skirmishes did take place.

By midday practically the whole city was in the insurgents' hands. The provisional government controlled only the Winter Palace and some of the streets around it.

On this morning Lenin wrote the address "To the Citizens of Russia" which announced that the uprising in Petrograd had triumphed and state power had passed into the hands of the Revolutionary Military Committee.

The American John Reed, author of the world-famous Ten Days that Shook the World, quotes W. E. Walling in this book: "The Russian workman is revolutionary, but he is neither violent, dogmatic, nor unintelligent. He is ready for the barricades, but he has studied them and alone of the workers of the world he has learned about them from actual experience. He is ready and willing to fight his oppressor, the capitalist class, to a finish. But he does not ignore the existence of other classes. He merely asks that the other classes take one side or the other in the bitter conflict that draws near . . ."

John Reed then writes: "Adventure it was, and one of the most marvellous mankind ever embarked upon, sweeping into history at the head of the toiling masses, and staking everything on their vast and simple desires . . ."

"No matter what one thinks of Bolshevism, it is undeniable that the Russian revolution is one of the great events in human history, and the rise of the Bolsheviks a phenomenon of world-wide importance."

In fact this people had its only allies among the dockers in London, the unemployed in Manhattan, the agricultural labourers in Poland and the German miners in the Ruhr. No state in the world recognized the new Russian rulers. Scientists and politicians of world-wide reputation prophesied their downfall over and over again—in vain. A new epoch in human history began, and with it began the history of German-Soviet friendship. The most qualified witnesses of this are those Germans who fought in the ranks of the Russian revolutionaries of 1917. GDR writer Otto Gotsche wrote the following contribution about one of them.

A German in the October Revolution

For days, weeks and months the prisoners' transports drove through the Ukraine via Kiev to Siberia. Only on Lake Baikal were they accommodated in a camp behind barbed wire. Life was not easy. Tsarism knew no mercy, and there was no respect for human dignity.

Paul Pschierer was selected for labour, his expert knowledge was needed in an electrical factory. The intelligent young man soon made contacts with Russian workers. He learned the Russian language and met Russian revolutionaries who had been banished to Siberia.

A new stage in his life began.

But the arbitrariness of the tsarist military again tore him out of the surroundings which

had become familiar to him. He came as far as Vladivostok with a labour transport and was employed in shipyards of the tsarist navy. Referring to the Geneva Convention Pschierer refused to work in war industry. Thus began a long road of suffering.

He was deported to the Arctic Ocean, to the Murmansk region for railway construction. At that time the tsarist government was building a strategic railway line from the Kola peninsula to Petersburg with the help of English and American material. The war material supplies of the allied western powers had to be transported quickly to the front; they were to enable the already shaken tsarist army to continue the war.

German and Austrian prisoners of war, Russian forced labourers, people deported from all parts of the gigantic empire, entire families were driven to work under the supervision of English officers. They died by the hundreds in the ice and snow deserts. The guards were Circassians, they lived their own lives and did not concern themselves much with the labour columns. Tsarism was their enemy, too.

And one day Paul Pschierer succeeded in escaping from this hell. The corrupt engineer of the railway construction firm who had bought the prisoners for thirty roubles per head from the tsarist military government disregarded the flight, and the doctor accepted the thirty roubles he was offered by Pschierer.

In Tikhvin, southeast of Petersburg, he was able to go underground at the end of 1916. Nobody noticed any more that he was a German; he was in perfect command of the Russian language and found work as a mechanic in a mill.

Here in Tikhvin Pschierer also got to know his later wife, a young Jewish student. Through this woman Pschierer made contacts with revolutionary circles in Petersburg, which had in the meantime been renamed Petrograd.

The February Revolution shook tsarist Russia. The proletariat of Petrograd, the soldiers and sailors rose. In Tikhvin there was a large POW camp. In the 1916-1917 winter it had become ever more obvious that the ground on which tsarism ruled was beginning to shake. One morning in February revolutionary sailors, soldiers and workers opened the gates of the military prison.

The representatives of tsarism were ingloriously precipitated into nothingness. Hundreds of women went through the city rejoicing; troops of soldiers with red cockades and flags brought about the revolution. They also released the fifteen hundred German, Austrian and Hungarian prisoners who immediately elected a soldiers' council.

Pschierer, now working as a film projectionist, was elected to the soldiers' council of the prisoners-of-war and made close contacts with worker officials in Tikhvin and Petrograd.

In April 1917 Pschierer, who happened to be in Petrograd on that day, witnessed Lenin's arrival at the Finland Station. Suddenly he saw a thickset, barely medium-tall man on the platform, surrounded by people. He spoke.—“Who is that?” “Lenin!”

It was the greatest event in his life. Lenin's appearance and the clear, revolutionary attitude of the Bolshevik Party became the model for his political work, too.

In the summer of 1917 when the position of the Kerensky government was already shaken, White Guard troops marched into Tikhvin; there was shooting, the counter-revolutionary elements tried to take possession of the town. Ninety per cent of the German, Austrian and Hungarian prisoners-of-war took up the cause of the workers' and peasants' soviets and supported the proletariat of Tikhvin in the struggle against the White troops.

In August 1917 Pschierer moved to relatives of his wife in Petrograd. The hotel in which he lived was scarcely 800 metres from the Winter Palace, the seat of the provisional government. The Bolshevik Party had smuggled a large number of comrades into the palace, the caretaker was a sympathizer. After the July massacre in Petrograd which was arranged by the Kerensky government to put down the hungry proletariat that went into the streets, there were new demonstrations, hunger riots and Cossack attacks.

The war went on, but the masses demanded peace ever more threateningly. In mid-October the hotel was occupied by workers and sailors one night. Armed workers used it as one of their starting bases for the attack on the Winter Palace. When the gun of the Aurora fired from the Neva in the evening of a frosty day in October, workers, sailors and soldiers marched from here to storm the seat of the counter-revolutionary Kerensky government. The 800 metres over the Nevsky Prospect, the Millionaya Ulitsa and the streets of the vicinity were stormily covered.

The ten days that shook the world had begun.

Former prisoner-of-war Paul Pschierer also had a rifle in his hand again on that day; his hand firmly grasped the cool barrel when he fixed the triangular bayonet. The happenings of the last ten years flashed through his mind. He saw himself in the trenches of the wooded Carpathian Mountains. Dead and dying soldiers, grenades, wire entanglement... Then he threw his rifle away, he would never take it up again. Down with war...! But what sort of war was it? A criminal war, a war of the oppressors, a war of conquest...

Today something else was at stake, peace, freedom, the liberation of the working class.

And then former prisoner-of-war Paul Pschierer also stood in the street, a rifle in his hand again.

Pschierer joined the Red Guard. In the building of a half-finished theatre in the Sergeevskaya Ulitsa he helped as an aircraft mechanic to instal an aircraft pool. He converted civil vehicles into armoured military vehicles for the Red Guard. Many German, Hungarian and Austrian prisoners-of-war worked at his side. Soon he was active as a team leader in the mechanical department and many American, English and German automobiles and lorries were converted into armoured vehicles bristling with guns.

The enforced peace of Brest-Litovsk ended the war on the eastern front. On behalf of the Austro-Hungarian government General Kretschy came to Petrograd as head of a repatriation commission to arrange for the transport of the prisoners-of-war and their re-enlistment in the army, for the war of the Central Powers on the western fronts went on. Pschierer and other members of the soldiers' council soon put an end to the activity of the arrogant gentleman and his staff. He was driven away, and the soldiers' council made the building of the old Austrian embassy its seat; the former prisoners-of-war expressed their "thanks" for such a "trip home" which was to end in the trenches of the western front.

In 1918 the masses of the people went into the streets in Germany. Newspapers screamed "Revolution", and there were not a few voices which declared that this movement was imported from Soviet Russia. Of course, Soviet Russia was an example for Germany, but it could not be the cause of the violent rebellions of the German people in November 1918. The cause was the war in which the German people had been involved, and its frightful and miserable outcome. The cause was the realization by the half-starved workers and the poverty-stricken peasants that those who had described this war to them as a stroll, had made huge profits out of it. The German people had to pay for it with more than one million dead and crippled. Hunger, poverty and hatred moved the people. Their patience and suffering had been misused beyond measure. And thus in the final analysis the causes of the revolution in Germany did not at all differ from those in Russia in 1917. It was the will of the people to remove these causes along with their initiators for ever. They wanted a system similar to that in Soviet Russia, they wanted to be their own masters, they wanted to determine themselves what orders are given, what is written in the newspapers, what happens to the property of the people...

The events in Berlin during the November days of 1918 were described by the socialist German writer Adam Scharer who died in 1948.

End and Beginning

We have been accoutred for four weeks already. Don't they know where to go anymore? To the front? The very thought has become intolerable to me.

I have never been a real soldier. But now the last shadow falls off me. The years of endured fear, suffered hunger, experienced misuse stir up new resistance.

And not only with me.

The avalanche rolls. The first stone is loosened in Kiel. The flame of rebellion arouses the sailors. Factories open. The Kiel workers show their solidarity with the sailors.

The agitation begins again. The horsemen form themselves for new attacks. The men in blue (police—editor) again shoulder their carbines. The informers take up their work.

It is no use.

The avalanche jumps over to Hamburg, to Bremen, to Hanover. The giant proletariat breaks his fetters, appears on the political stage and demands: "Down with the state of siege!", "Liberation of the political prisoners!", "Immediate link with the international proletariat!"

A "people's government" is to save what can still be saved. But the Spartacus League (a union of revolutionary Marxists which came into existence in 1916; under the leadership of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg it fought against imperialist war and militarism. On 30 December 1918 the Communist Party of Germany emerged from it.—editor) is already forming the masses for the attack.

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg proclaim: "As long as everything created by you does not belong to you, the workers, who gather the gifts of the earth with their heads and hands to make people joyful, so long will the bloodthirsty haggling of those who pile up gold rage around you. As long as the workers do not smash a system in which the accumulated gold can mobilize the hatred of people against people, so long will you wade through horror and disgrace, with or without war. You have become superior to this system. You must crush it, or you will suffocate!"

"People here and across the seas, in the tropics and in eternal winter are stirred up against one another by the murdering chauvinists of all countries for the sake of filthy lucre. We declare war on them! The big murder was no 'destiny': Human beings are responsible for the immeasurable crime. In the pillory with them! The enemy is in your midst!"

Our sergeant who has us fall in in the evening and addresses us as "Comrades" still appears only ridiculous to me. But when he presumes to warn us of Bolshevism I reflect

whether I should not kick him in the belly. It is not necessary. The contradiction of the others encourages me to begin earlier with what I want to say. When I finish there is nothing more to be seen of the superiors. Two hours later the soldiers of the entire regiment gather in the big riding school. An officer dares to speak of the fateful hour of the fatherland. A storm sweeps him away.

On the same evening I go back on a fast train. I consider it a matter of course that those who dared to stretch out their dirty fingers for Karl Liebknecht and comrades are long since under lock and key. I read of the new, the old human right which is proclaimed by the proletariat. To me this is all as self-evident as the exultation of the returning soldiers, the workers and working women in all towns through which we pass.

Berlin has still not surrendered. We are thirty deserters. We know that the identity cards which we received from the workers' and soldiers' council in Hanover are not yet valid in Berlin. We therefore leave the train at a little suburban station.

The next morning I stand before the factory gate and tell the doorkeeper my name. He demands my control card.

"Hans Betzoldt-but you know me?"

"That's no concern of mine at all!"

"Ring up Riedel."

"I haven't time!"

With a jump I am through the entrance. He curses behind me. I go through the yard, see that the big hall is full of workers.

Riedel rings the bell.

"Second point on the agenda. The hour of decision has come. In Kiel, Hamburg, Hanover, Bremen, Munich the proletariat is marching in unity with the soldiers! They await the answer of the Berlin workers. The revolutionary shop stewards have proclaimed a general strike."

Riedel is not able to continue. He is interrupted by applause: "Down with the war!"—"Forward!"—"March!"

When we leave the enterprise the workers of the Albatros factory are already streaming out of the gates. A red flag flutters over their heads.

"Good-bye, Riedel!"

"Where are you going, Betzoldt?"

I am already half way across the street: "To the Knorrbremse" (a Berlin enterprise-editor).

"Is the Rummelsburg power station closed yet?"

I turn again: "The Lichtenberg people are here" (meaning the workers of the Lichtenberg municipal district in Berlin—editor).

Riedel smiles, smiles still more, waves. He points to the station. From the other side, black and almost unending, come the workers from the large enterprises in Berlin-Schöneeweide.

The workers of the Schwartzkopf works are standing in the Humboldthain park. Thousands of them. We march.

Our next destination is the AEG (General Electricity Company, well-known trust-editor) in Volta street. There, women are in the majority. Armed workers and soldiers march in front of the demonstration procession. Smaller and medium-sized enterprises join the procession which continues to grow in a short time. The news that the workers in the east are already marching increases the enthusiasm to the proportions of a storm.

Two officers look at the mutineers in silence. Two men go to them and take their revolvers and dirks. A troop of policemen approaches us. They deliver up their arms without resistance. They are distributed among the workers.

A Russian prisoner-of-war drags a sack on to a cart, puts it down, laughs and waves in greeting. We wave. Some men go to him and shake hands with him. He disappears for a moment and comes back with some of his comrades. They march with us.

The procession approaches the AEG. A deputation talks to the doorkeeper. He gesticulates with his hands, refuses admission.

"What is there still to be talked about?"

A few men seize him and push him back. The workers rush in.

"Armed men this way!"

A troop guards the workers rushing into the enterprise from the street. Another takes up position in the yard. The call "general strike!" resounds through all departments.

Soldiers, workers, women stand on the machines and benches: "The Berlin proletariat marches." "Our brothers in Munich, Kiel, Hamburg call for help!", "One for all—all for one!", "Down with the war!"

The motors stand still. Engineers and foremen disappear. The workers join us.

The procession increases. The squares, sidewalks, lawns, the fronts of windows are black with people. A woman in an elegant coat and hat says, shaking her head: "What will all this lead to?"

She is shown a signboard: "Revolution!"

Stettiner railway station, Chausseestrasse: To the Maikäferkaserne (barracks).

Soldiers stand behind closed windows.

We wave.

Tack! –Tack, tack, tack, tack!

Women scream. A few people roll on the pavement.

The wall of people wavers. A panic threatens to break all discipline.

Only for a moment.

The armed men do not give in. They seek cover, and release the safety catches of their rifles.

“Bloodhounds!”

“Don’t give way!”

“Storm!—Everybody in!”

Doors burst. Armed men climb over the gateways. The barracks is occupied in no time. The sentry delivers up the arms. The officers are disarmed. The insignia of rank are taken from them.

The soldiers fraternize with us.

The files of the offices are thrown out of the windows on to the street. The machine-guns are requisitioned and taken to a car.

“Armed men to the front!”

A rapid-firing gun stands on the roof of the prison in the Lehrter Strasse. Will they shoot?

“In extended order, march, march across the gates!”

The jailers must go from door to door and open. Shaking of hands, embraces, someone shouts “Long live the revolution!”, seizes a rifle and joins the ranks.

In front of the barracks, next to the prison, everything has remained silent. Will there again be shots from an ambush?

“Once again, attack!”

A sergeant waves his handkerchief. Soldiers rush out of the main entrance and join us.

We march on. Now we are already hundreds of thousands. Banners appear. The flags become a sea of red. Children are in the procession, tramwaymen, firemen, stretcher-bearers, among them entire groups of soldiers: riflemen, sharp-shooters, lancers, sailors, sailors on lorries, sailors with rifles. They are greeted and cheered wherever they appear, they are lifted on shoulders and they speak.

Ever new information: “The Kaiser has fled!” “The prisoners in Moabit are also free!”

Workers speak. From upturned cars, from windows, short, worn-out figures, giants, women. They raise their fists, thunder into the marching crowds, inflame, jubilate, scream!

In Unter den Linden everything is jammed. The sailors rush from Brandenburg Gate to the Palace and from the Palace back again to the former gate sentry. Where up to yesterday soldiers of the first guards regiment had been standing, are now armed workers and soldiers with red cockades.

We march back to the Palace. Everything is black with people. The workers' battalions were also victorious in the west and in the south.

The whole of Berlin has gathered. The millions of workers have conquered and defeated the last obstacles. Everything is in our hands.

There is singing in the side streets: "Red is the banner which we unfurl!"

Karl Liebknecht speaks.

The red flag flutters over the Palace.

The storm of the November Revolution drove the war profiteers, the generals, all those high gentlemen who had remained in Germany when the Kaiser fled, to the wall, but it did not break them. They soon raised their heads again and again cast their shadows over Germany. They gave 500 million marks to the "Anti-Bolshevist League" which was called an "insurance fee" against the danger of revolution by trust ruler Hugo Stinnes. They found the social democrat Gustav Noske who took over the supreme command of the counter-revolutionary troops and then said: "As far as I am concerned, someone must be the bloodhound, I do not shrink from the responsibility!" The revolutionary forces proved to be too weak in Germany, too badly organized to defeat the monopolists and bankers and their generals who resisted being liquidated with all their force.

Hands Off
Soviet Russia II

In Soviet Russia the workers and peasants consolidated their rule slowly but steadily. The powerful men in the world sensed the danger of their example. The monopolists did not want to lose the tremendous profits which they had extracted from the mines and factories of Russia. What they had not achieved with slander, extortion and lies had to be obtained in another way. They sent soldiers against the young Soviet power. In 1918 foreign military intervention began, Britons, Frenchmen, Poles, Germans, Americans Japanese and others allied themselves with the counter-revolutionary forces inside the Soviet state.

The class-struggle flared up again on Russian soil. The poorly-equipped and hungry regiments of the newly-formed Red Army had to fight the military hordes of their former exploiters as well as tens of thousands of soldiers of international reaction.

Allies of the Russian workers and peasants in these difficult times were again the working people of other countries who supported Soviet Russia in word and deed. In Germany, solidarity with the imperilled Soviet state grew stronger under the slogan "Hands off Soviet Russia".

Otto Kühn, a revolutionary German worker, wrote about one of the many actions.

The Polonia Express

We had put down the Kapp putsch (attempt of the German Junkers and monarchists to overthrow the government of the republic which was frustrated after three days by a general strike—editor) because we acted in unity. But the forces of reaction had soon begun to organize themselves a supply of weapons again. Checking through the goods loading bays at Erfurt station where I was shop-stewards' convener we discovered camouflaged arms consignments from the rifle factories at Suhl and Zella-Mehlis.

To prevent more arms being smuggled we formed a four-man control commission. I was put in charge of it.

We discussed further measures with Comrades Wilhelm Pieck (W. Pieck was president of the GDR from 1949 to 1960—editor) and Ottomar Geschke in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany. At two big meetings in the present congress hall in the Futterstrasse the Erfurt workers were informed about the machinations of the reactionaries and their aid enlisted to prevent further transports.

Once we opened a box which was supposed to contain "iron parts"; we found twenty-five brand-new rifles. They were broken into "iron parts" with a sledge-hammer and

returned to the box in this state. Contents and consignment note now tallied and, at the request of the station-master, I endorsed the note: "Contents examined, O.K.-Kühn, shop-stewards' convener."

Shortly after this our control commission was put to a crucial test.

The Polish nationalists had invaded Soviet Russia, incited by the British and French governments.

At that time France still maintained occupation troops in Upper Silesia to control the exploitation of the Upper Silesian coal mines for France. An agreement had been concluded between the French and the German governments whereby a train, the so-called Polonia Express, was allowed to run every day to Upper Silesia and back to supply the French troops stationed in the coal districts with food and clothing. This train arrived at the goods station in Erfurt every day at noon from the west and travelled on to the east after a one-hour stop.

The Erfurt railway management board had informed us about this agreement. When the Polonia Express suddenly had eight and nine trucks instead of the usual six we were surprised. Did this mean that arms for the Polish interventionists were being transported?

We decided to check the suspicious train.

On 3 September 1920 the train pulled into the station at noon—as usual. It carried a guard of twenty French soldiers, an officer and an interpreter. We went to the officer and told him that we had to check the extra trucks. Instead of a reply he barked an order, and the safety-catches of twenty rifles were released.

Resolute action was called for if we wanted to have things our own way. I stepped forward and had the interpreter tell the officer that we had been delegated by the workers of Erfurt and could not take any responsibility for what would happen to him and his soldiers if even only one shot were fired.

In the meantime many workers from the railway workshops had gathered round us and taken up a threatening attitude towards the soldiers. In the face of this determined stand the officer allowed the trucks to be examined.

We found what we had suspected. The last truck was loaded with fifteen tons of French small-arms ammunition. I immediately instructed our shunters to shunt the truck on to a dead-end siding. The train had to continue its journey without the ammunition.

But that was not the end of the matter. During the day we learned that the management board had ordered the truck to be attached to the Polonia Express the following day.

I called the control commission together again. We agreed that the ammunition was

not to be allowed to get to Poland. A meeting of the railwaymen was called and I asked the workers to help unload the truck. About fifty, of varying political and trade union views, answered the call and carried the heavy boxes to an empty spot behind the goods station. There the ammunition was piled up together with combustible material. I then had the place roped off, poured paraffin over the heap and set fire to it.

One explosion followed the other for twenty minutes and all that was left of the fifteen tons of ammunition was a thick cloud of acrid smoke.

The armies of fourteen states attacked Soviet Russia from all sides and occupied large parts of the country. Living eye-witnesses, newspapers, photographs and leaflets report about their brutality and about the ruthless and gruesome way in which counter-revolutionaries ravaged the land. But this could not break the will of the masses of the people or the heroism of the soldiers of the Red Army. At the cost of immense sacrifices and the even greater impoverishment of a country already in a state of devastation, the aggressors were driven out and the enemies of Soviet power inside the country destroyed. W. K. Blücher, Marshal of the Red Army, wrote about the last decisive battles:

The Victory of the Brave

A bunch of marauding White Guards (counter-revolutionary troops commanded by tsarist generals and officers—editor)—that is what it was, this army under General Wrangel; remnants of the counter-revolution, remnants of the tsarist Don and Kuban armies. The depraved remnants of the Russian bourgeoisie and the aristocratic officers found refuge on the Crimean peninsula on the Black Sea coast. From there they threatened our young Soviet Republic.

Everything turned out differently than they had expected. Wrangel was not only beaten at Apostolovo but suffered an even more devastating defeat at Kakhovka, which—in October 1920—was the beginning of the end of Wrangel's army.

It was in those days, unforgettable and glorious for all of us, that the party and the government entrusted me with the command of the 51st division. This, together with Koslenkov's cavalry brigade formed the core of the 6th army and became known as the "Perekop group". The task assigned this group was the destruction of the troop units of Wrangel's army under General Witkowski around Perekop (town near the approaches to the Crimean peninsula—editor) and to occupy the town itself.

Who were those men of the 51st rifle division charged with the task of storming Perekop?

The division was founded in 1918. At that time it was recruited from individual workers' detachments of the Red Guards from the Kiselov mines, the Motovilikh works and other factories in the Urals. From the very start this division of workers' detachments embodied the will of the proletariat, showing great powers of endurance and bravery. This mixed array of units had welded itself into a model division noted for its spirit of self-sacrifice and extreme militant discipline. The men had already distinguished themselves during the hard battles with Admiral Kolchak in Siberia.

And it was these battle-tested troops that were sent into action against Wrangel's forces. A quarter of the members of the 51st division were workers, the rest peasants. In the night of 27 October the men of the 51st division launched their attack with the cry: "Destroy Wrangel! The Crimea must be ours!"

On 28 October the army corps under Witkowski was smashed and our regiments took Perekop. On 29 October we were facing the steppe, the wide expanse of which was bordered by the never-silent waters of the Black Sea and the dirty, marshy Sivash lakes. It would be difficult to find a more effective natural fortification anywhere in the world.

In former times the khans of the Crimea had had a "Turkish wall" of earth, gigantic in its dimensions, built by prisoners and slaves to the north of the Isthmus of Perekop. In front of the wall was a wide moat, almost a canal, which ended in the Black Sea and the Sivash lakes, respectively. This moat bars the way to all those approaching that region from the north, whether on horseback or on foot.

These massive obstacles were, of course, not only fully utilized by Wrangel but were reinforced by extensive fortifications.

He had the fortifications equipped with land and naval artillery and surrounded them with a network of machine-gun emplacements, dug-outs and pill-boxes. Vast barbed-wire entanglements formed the perimeter of this line of defence.

After an inspection of these defence lines on 30 October 1920 Wrangel himself stated: "Much has been done, but much still remains to be done. But, whatever the case, from today on the Crimea cannot be taken by the enemy."

And it was here, in these positions, that the finale of the embittered fight against Wrangel took place.

Under the cover of darkness our regiments and divisions slowly approached the Turkish Wall.

In the morning of 30 October blasts of gun-fire tore the dense veil of fog which lay

over the area in front of the Turkish Wall, artillery salvoes swished through the air and the ear was deafened by the roaring inferno of exploding shells. The path before our valiant fighters of the 51st division was illuminated by a fearful light.

Panting orderlies dashed back and forth, the telephone rang incessantly. And suddenly there was good news:

"The 6th company of the 456th regiment from Ryazanov has broken through at Rogatka and reached the Wall. The other companies are beginning to attack."

Soon, however, this heroic company suffered a set-back: the White Guard tank units beat them back from the Wall, went over to the attack and broke into Perekop. The 456th regiment, which suffered heavy losses fought for every inch of ground, for every bit of cover, but was forced gradually to retreat in the face of the overwhelming superiority of the enemy.

Aware of the seriousness of the situation, the commander of our first shock detachment on the left flank started to attack, in order to assist the 456th regiment.

The operation was successful and the White Guards were even forced back behind the Wall again.

In the night preceding 1 November the first combat brigade, supported by the 152nd brigade, attacked the eastern part of the Wall. The heavy fire of the enemy which brought us great losses, forced us to remain in front of the barbed-wire entanglements. It became clear that the troops of the Perekop group alone could not take the position.

During the night of 1 November a part of the 6th army, which was in positions some seven or eight kilometres north-west of the Wall, was withdrawn.

It grew colder and we had the first frost. The men of our units were badly shod and forced to make use of every conceivable means of protecting themselves against the weather.

At that time it was reported that there was a ford across the Sivash. We went out to check the information and confirmed that the Sivash could be crossed in several places. I got hold of all available vehicles and slowly we transported ammunition, wire-cutters, implements, food supplies and fodder to the other bank.

The land, ravaged by the war, supplied us with all that could be spared, but it was not enough to smash the fortifications of the Whites.

On the eve of the third anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution our preparations for the attack were completed. M. V. Frunze (well-known military commander of the Soviet forces, People's Commissar for the Army and Navy; died 1925-editor) was sent to the headquarters of the 51st division, to take over the personal com-

mand of the operations of this proven unit, because Wrangel had concentrated his élite-troops on the other side.

During the night of 7 November the Red Army units launched a renewed attack. Under a hail of artillery and machine-gun fire, chilled to the marrow by the frost and up to their knees in the swampy Sivash, the men dragged their machine guns and guns forward. By the morning of 8 November they reached the trenches of the Whites. Breaking through the barbed-wire they forced General Fostikov's men to retreat at the point of the bayonet.

When the fog lifted, at about nine o'clock, all our batteries opened fire. The Whites sent a hail of shells over to us from the Turkish Wall. Within a radius of seven kilometres the earth was transformed into a sea of craters. Towards midday the shock troops, together with the 152nd brigade and the 453rd company launched their attack and, despite heavy losses, gradually got closer to the Turkish Wall.

That day did not bring victory, but the goal had moved nearer. Our units destroyed approximately 200 pieces of ordnance and 400 machine guns of the enemy.

Around midnight M. V. Frunze rang me up: "The Sivash is rising. Our units stationed on the Litovsk peninsula might be cut off. You must take the Wall-whatever the price."

Once again the exhausted men were thrown into battle. On 9 November, just before three o'clock, the apparently invincible town of Perekop was taken.

At dawn on 9 November headquarters moved into Armyansk. Operations gradually shifted further to the south and flared up once again around the positions at Yushun. Exhausted by the battles and weakened by heavy losses, without food and water and only scanty reserves of ammunition, the 51st division battled its way ahead in order to help other units to break through the Yushun positions, which were protected by a dense network of barbed-wire entanglements. There were 40 guns of varying calibres and roughly 100 machine guns to each kilometre of the front. Vessels of the White fleet steamed across the sea and took part in the action with heavy naval guns.

From the top of a hill we overlooked the fierce battle. Wrangel's army had two or three times more guns than we but our artillerymen did not let themselves be intimidated by the superiority of the White artillery. They bravely dragged their guns to the foremost positions and destroyed the enemy's concrete machine-gun emplacements by direct fire. The soldiers, commanders and commissars appeared indefatigable.

I called Kruglov, the commander of the brigade which had suffered the heaviest losses, and ordered him to take his troops into the reserve. His men were to be replaced by the brigade under Rink which had had a rest. Kruglov, however, asked to be given reinforcements and not to be replaced. During the night the commander of the 6th army corps

had the Latvian division move up to replace the 151st brigade under Khlebnikov. Khlebnikov, his commissar, the chief of staff and the regimental commander, however, asked that a different unit should be relieved; they wanted to be the first to start the offensive.

That was the spirit that prevailed throughout the entire division.

During the night of 10 November Yushun was taken in an assault by the 151st brigade.

Following successful battles by General Barbovich's cavalry, the last attack of the Whites was beaten off.

On 11 November towards noon we transmitted the following report over the radio: "At 9. a.m. the heroic units of the 51st division broke through the last positions of the enemy at Yushun, forced the Whites to retreat, and took a firm position in the Crimea. The enemy is retreating in great panic."

The 1st and 2nd cavalry armies advanced in the Crimea, and on 15 November the 51st division occupied Sevastopol.

The fact that we emerged as victors in all the decisive battles with Wrangel can be ascribed solely to the inflexible will to victory and the utmost courage conceived by the strength of the party among the workers and peasants on our side. Among many others I can recall the following examples:

The Whites were counter-attacking the positions of the 456th company, supported by an armoured train and heavy artillery. Comrade Ivanov, the hero of Perekop, commander of the 6th company, advanced against the enemy's artillery. He and his men could not be stopped—not even by shrapnel. They dealt with the artillerymen with their bayonets and made their way towards the armoured train. Under the devastating fire of twelve machine guns the company began to dismantle the rails. Recognizing the danger of being cut off, the crew of the armoured train withdrew. Only five men of Ivanov's company survived, but the regiment was able to ward off the counter-attack successfully and occupy the second line of trenches.

At a railway station the White Guards set fire to a number of their abandoned railway trucks which were loaded with ammunition. I saw how Red Army men, more dead than alive from exhaustion, and without any orders, risked their lives jumping between the exploding railway trucks and uncoupling them, so as to save the ammunition.

The 453rd company, retreating from the village of Alexandrovka, noted an abandoned battery with four guns of the 52nd division. Red Army men, headed by their commissar Oparin, ran up to the abandoned guns and dragged them along with them. Neither the approaching enemy, nor the bullets and shells whistling past their ears detained them.

The soldiers dragged the guns out of the hail of artillery fire, handed them over to their own artillerymen and immediately returned to their places in the line.

The commander of a company, the communist Brisgalov, was wounded by a splinter in his shoulder, but remained at his post until the next bullet killed him . . .

In those days we were like beggars, in rags, starved, with an industry ruined by the Whites and not even in a position adequately to provide our army with the most essential supplies. The fact that they won the fight can be ascribed only to their courage, their enthusiasm and their devotion to the cause of the proletariat.

We carried the banner of victory from Kazan to Vladivostok, from Orla to Sevastopol, defeating the entire united international and Russian forces of counter-revolution.

Now that the iron will of the party, and the united strength of the working class and the kolkhoz-peasants have made our native land a country with an advanced industry and agriculture and at a time when our army is the most powerful and best-equipped fighting force in the world, we may calmly look into the future.

On 28 February 1921 V. I. Lenin made the following statement: "If we had been told in 1917 that we would hold out in three years of war against the whole world, that, as a result of the war, two million Russian landowners, capitalists and their children would find themselves abroad, and that we would turn out to be the victors, no one of us would have believed it. A miracle took place because the workers and peasants rose against the attack of the landowners and capitalists in such force that even powerful capitalism was in danger."

Friends and Enemies
of Soviet Power III

But victory put Soviet power face to face with tasks which were just as, if not more, difficult. Russia had to be freed from the darkness of backwardness; hunger, want and disease had to be overcome, the tremendous damage in the enterprises and country districts had to be repaired. And the whole country had to be developed into a modern industrial power. In this situation all the help that foreign friends could give was of inestimable value. Soviet writer M. Oserov has compiled a few examples of the solidarity of German workers, scientists and artists.

Maxim Gorky's Call and its Response

On 13 July 1921. A. M. Gorky sent a telegram abroad in which he asked: "all honest men in Europe and America to give speedy assistance to Russia. Send grain and medical aid."

Numerous German scientists, artists and journalists responded to this call. In his reply to Maxim Gorky, Gerhart Hauptmann wrote:

"The German people, who have had to suffer much and yet are always ready to help, are deeply moved by the call from the East and will take appropriate measures."

The appeal issued by the German International Aid Committee was signed by artists Käthe Kollwitz and Otto Nagel, writers Bernhard Kellermann, Johannes R. Becher, Ernst Toller, Leonhard Frank and Professor Paul Oestreich, actor Alexander Moissi, the world-famous physicist Albert Einstein and many others. Käthe Kollwitz published a series of drawings under the slogan: "Russia needs your help!" Children and young people carried those drawings through the streets and collected money. Johannes R. Becher contributed the royalties from a new volume of poetry to the aid fund. Ernst Toller donated the money received for his play "Die Maschinenstürmer" (The Machine Wreckers) to the Aid Committee. At the end of May 1922 the workers of Germany had donated 1,082,150 gold roubles to starving Russia.

The German workers gave effective aid to Soviet Russia in the work of reconstruction of the national economy that had been ravaged by the Civil War. Thousands of workers produced tools and machines in overtime shifts as donations to the Soviet people. In May 1922 the German workers, on the initiative of the Communist Party of Germany, collected tools and materials required for the reconstruction of the national economy of Soviet Russia. In only a few days tools worth eighteen million marks had been collected.

The campaign of working-class solidarity assumed great importance in the consolidation of the bonds of friendship between the German and Soviet workers. Veteran workers

of the Nationally-Owned Sachsenwerk in Dresden—Georg Quaitzsch and Martin Krause—gave the following account of a journey undertaken by German workers to the Soviet Union in those days:

“As the workers of Soviet Russia were suffering from hunger and want, we decided to give them effective aid. We collected money, clothing and tools. We were informed later that our tools were given to the workers of the Dynamo factory in Moscow. They sent us a letter of thanks and invited us to visit them. That was in 1924. We were just about to go on strike then, so the journey had to be postponed. Three workers from another factory went to Moscow instead. They brought back a valuable present from our friends—a bust of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin.

“We hid the bust when the fascists seized power in 1933. For twelve years it was hidden in a safe place in ‘Saxon Switzerland’. In 1945 it once more occupied a place of honour at our factory. When our friends of the Dynamo factory in Moscow heard about the fate of their gift, they wrote a letter cordially thanking us for having kept it safely for so many years.”

The number of delegations of German workers visiting the USSR increased, especially during the years of the First Five Year Plan. In many cases German specialists helped their Soviet friends to put new machines into operation. There are workers at many GDR factories who helped to build Soviet factories during the days of the First Five Year Plan. Paul Scheibe, Richard Vogt and Paul Kleinlein of the Nationally-Owned Instrument Works at Suhl participated in the construction of Soviet factories at Gorki, Ulyanovsk and Stalinsk.

Hans Klemm, a pensioner living in Berlin, has kept the certificate which he received as an Activist of the Five Year Plan to this day; it is one of his most cherished mementoes.

“The years I worked in the Soviet Union were the happiest years of my life,” Hans Klemm recalled. “It was then that I first learned what free, creative work meant. In 1932 I was rewarded for good work with a trip on the Volga to Astrakhan on the steamer ‘Komsomol’. Hundreds of activists, workers of many nationalities, went along on that trip. We were like one big family.”

During the 1920's the popular masses in Germany were fighting for the preservation of their revolutionary achievements and against the danger of counter-revolutionary putsches. The climax of that struggle was the rising in Hamburg in October 1923.

Ernst Thälmann, communist and almost legendary working-class leader, headed that

struggle, which began during the night of 22 October with the assault on seventeen police stations.

Inflation and the indescribable exploitation of the workers and the middle class by unscrupulous financial speculations on the part of industrialists and bankers had brought mass discontent to boiling point. At the time of the rising a loaf of bread was sold in Hamburg at a price of 1.66 thousand million marks. In Central Germany counter-revolutionary troops were on the march to overthrow the governments of workers and peasants set up there. In all parts of Germany there were clashes between the people and the central government.

In this situation Thälmann intended to give the signal, by the Hamburg rising, for the start of the decisive battle throughout the whole of Germany. Betrayal, wavering and indecision on the part of many party and trade union leaders frustrated this last chance in that period of German history.

The Hamburg revolutionaries were not defeated; they stopped fighting when they realized that their action would not be followed up. The indecision, cowardice and lack of confidence in the power of the popular masses, above all on the part of the leaders of German social democracy and the trade unions, as in 1914 and 1919 proved to be detrimental to the German nation.

Germany was languishing under the shameful burden of the Treaty of Versailles, about which Lenin said: A peace was imposed on the vanquished country, but it was a usurer's peace, an oppressor's peace, a butcher's peace, because Germany and Austria were looted and carved up."

The Germans were neither politically nor economically in a position to conduct their own policy. At the 8th Congress of Soviets Lenin pointed out in a few sentences why cooperation between Germany and Russia should be realistic and reasonable in the face of this witch's brew of political intrigues, diplomatic fraud and robbery, which only served the interests of the ruling circles in western countries:

"The Peace of Versailles has created a situation in which Germany cannot even dream of a breathing-space, or of not being plundered, of not having the means of subsistence taken away from her, of her people not being doomed to starvation and extinction; Germany cannot even dream of any of these things, so that, naturally, her only means of salvation lies in an alliance with Soviet Russia, a country towards which her eyes are therefore turning . . . The German bourgeois government has an implacable hatred of the Bolsheviks, but such is its international position that, against its own desires, the government is driven towards peace with Soviet Russia."

Only sixteen months went by before these words became history in the little town of Rapallo, where at the same time history confirmed the correctness of the statement that cooperation would be advantageous to both countries.

In Genoa, not far from Rapallo, a conference was held at the same time—in April 1922—where the powers of the Entente intended to make the Soviet state dependent.

Georgi V. Chicherin, at that time Soviet people's commissar for foreign affairs, wrote about that period in his memoirs.

The Parable of Jesus and the Devil

During the first period of our existence we were in the clutches of imperialist Germany. Two points of view on the Russian question confronted each other in Berlin. The military government under Ludendorff endeavoured to strangle Soviet Russia by military measures and to make it into a second Ukraine; the attack was delayed only temporarily.

Our tactics consisted in confronting the military government with the interests of German industry and trade. We told Stresemann and other far-seeing and influential bourgeois politicians: turning Russia into a second Ukraine will give you nothing. A permanent guerilla war and an underground resistance movement against you would begin. Neither industry nor trade would be able to develop. Russia would be turned into a desert and you would gain nothing. Only one alternative—the way of a compromise with us could lead to an economic upsurge in Russia and to economic advantages for you.

These arguments were convincing enough, and, in opposition to the military government, German industrial and commercial circles sought to pursue a policy of peaceful penetration in regard to Soviet Russia.

Genoa constituted the climax of the program of peaceful capitalist penetration of Russia. The Genoa Conference was a complicated affair. A big part in this was played by the growing bourgeois pacifism, which may certainly be expected to become even more apparent in the near future. In Genoa the Entente representatives spoke a great deal about the transformation of Europe, although in effect very little of concrete value was done to bring about that transformation.

The basic question at issue in Genoa was whether an independent economic development of Russia would be possible with the aid of foreign capital and yet without subjection to it, or whether foreign capital would become predominant. The Russian delegation resisted even the most crafty inducements—like Jesus in the well-known parable when

the devil promised to give him a large realm and to turn stones into bread if Jesus would submit to him. Soviet Russia was offered the most alluring prospects in return for the recognition of capitalist domination.

One may say that precisely in Genoa the basic lines of Russian foreign policy became apparent in their full significance: no subjection to capital, but independent development with its help; or, to put it more precisely, business without agreements imposing subjection or servility. That is why the Cannes resolution on the equality of rights of two opposed economic systems constituted the basis of all the activity of the Russian delegation in Genoa. The workers' and peasants' state, arisen among the advanced countries of Western Europe and the oppressed states of the East had become consolidated and reinforced, and appeared in Genoa as an independent great power. The new era of its existence, which had already begun, may be described as the era of "active policy".

In his book The Foreign Policy of the Soviet State from 1921 to 1925 which was published in Moscow in 1953, N. L. Rubinstein writes:

The Treaty of Rapallo

Sessions of the conference were not held on 16 April 1922 because of the Easter holidays. But on the next day, 17 April, when the heads of the delegations of the capitalist countries reported on their relations with Soviet Russia, the news of the conclusion of a treaty which had been signed by representatives of Soviet Russia and Germany the night before in Rapallo, a suburb of Genoa, struck like a bombshell.

The treaty which was concluded in Rapallo envisaged the reciprocal renunciation by Germany and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic of the repayment of their war costs and reparations for war damage. The two sides renounced the mutual repayment of their expenditures for prisoners-of-war.

Article 2 of the treaty was of the greatest importance: "Germany renounces the claims resulting from the previous application of the laws and measures of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic to German nationals or their private rights as well as the claims arising from the rights of the German Reich and the provinces against Russia or from other measures taken by the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic or its organs against Reich nationals or their private rights, provided that the government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic does not satisfy similar claims of third states."

The treaty provides for the immediate re-establishment of diplomatic and consular

relations between Germany and Soviet Russia and the development of trade, economic and legal relations in accordance with the most-favoured-nation principle. The German government declared its readiness to support the agreements planned by private firms as far as possible and to facilitate their realization. The basic decisions of the treaty should come into effect immediately . . .

For understandable reasons the German politicians and journalists did not underline the skill of the Soviet diplomats very much but emphasized that Germany was forced to conclude the treaty because it feared an agreement between Soviet Russia and the Entente powers. Thus, for example, Bernhard wrote in an article from Genoa: "Germany had to fear that an agreement between the allies and the Russians could come into being which would have detrimental effects on German interests . . ."

The signing of the Rapallo Treaty meant for Soviet Russia the consistent continuation of its policy of peace. The Soviet government also conducted this peace policy with respect to Germany. In the period after the peace of Brest it was characterized by the Soviet-German agreements on prisoners-of-war of 1920, by the Soviet proposal in the middle of 1920 to start negotiations on the normalization of relations, and by the Soviet-German trade pact of 6 May 1921 . . .

The motives which guided the German delegation in signing the treaty must be sought in the situation of German imperialism after the defeat in the First World War when Soviet Russia began to become an important factor in international politics, especially after the defeat of the intervention.

The German imperialists were and remained the worst enemies of Soviet Russia. But when the screw of the Versailles Treaty was tightened the Entente powers deepened the contradictions between themselves and Germany. This induced Germany to make advances to Russia, as was shown by Lenin. This also led to the emergence of two trends in German foreign policy, the "eastern orientation" and the "western orientation" . . .

The defenders of the so-called "eastern orientation" reckoned that they could utilize the agreement with Soviet Russia for their economic goals, for the stimulation of German industry and for political purposes to consolidate their positions against the pressure of the Entente. Naturally they were interested in cooperation with Soviet Russia only temporarily and secretly strove for the realization of the traditional policy of German reaction—"the drive to the east".

The "western orientation" was represented by liberal circles which relied on the help of the monopoly rulers of the chemical and potash industry who had contacts with French capital and some of the Ruhr tycoons and the financial oligarchy.

The so-called "western orientation" was also advocated by the leaders of German social democracy who bowed and scraped to the American and British imperialists.

These grim enemies of Soviet Russia and communism who feared the revolutionary influence of the socialist state on their own working class opposed the conclusion of a Soviet-German agreement in every way possible. No matter to which orientation the representatives of German imperialism clung, they had to reckon increasingly with the growing importance of Soviet Russia. This became especially obvious in connection with the sharpening of contradictions between Germany and the Entente in the spring of 1922. On the eve of the Genoa conference the German government received a note from the reparations commission with the demand that new taxes amounting to 60 thousand million marks be introduced and that the allies be given the right to control German finance. The Poincaré cabinet demanded the settlement of the reparation payments and intended to occupy the Ruhr area if this did not happen. The magnates of German heavy industry exerted pressure on the government to resist the victor powers and carry through a more active eastern policy . . .

The German imperialists who did not seriously think of a separate treaty with the Soviet Union counted on obtaining concessions from the Entente powers—to the disadvantage and at the cost of Soviet Russia. They played a double game and even feared that the Entente powers could conclude an agreement with Soviet Russia without the participation of Germany and that the enticing project of an Anglo-German consortium for the exploitation of the Russian riches could prove to be a soap-bubble.

For this reason they conducted negotiations with the Soviet delegation. The Soviet diplomats did not allow themselves to be taken in but skilfully exploited the contradictions between the Anglo-French imperialists and Germany. After the Rapallo Treaty there was no more talk of a consortium . . .

The Soviet-German treaty was an event of great political importance and represented the greatest victory of the Soviet peace policy and of international cooperation.

In Genoa the Entente made efforts to confront Soviet Russia with a united front of capitalist European states. Britain and France wanted to force the Soviet government to renounce the most important achievements of the Great October Socialist Revolution as compensation for de jure recognition and to capitulate to bourgeois Europe.

The Rapallo Treaty impressively demonstrated the failure of these attempts. The Soviet Republic broke through the front of capitalist states directed against it . . .

The renunciation by Germany in the treaty of compensation for the damage which arose out of the nationalization was a heavy blow to the imperialists of Britain, France,

the USA and other countries. It became obvious that the demand for the return of or compensation for the capital and enterprises nationalized by the Soviet government which were foreign property before was not indispensable for the restoration of normal relations between the capitalist countries and Soviet Russia. An American historian dealing with Europe after Versailles was forced to admit that the Rapallo Treaty was "the greatest achievement of the Soviet government at that time."

The Rapallo Treaty was also of great importance to Germany. It was the first political treaty after the dictate of Versailles which was concluded by Germany with a big power on the basis of equal rights.

The Rapallo Treaty met with great response among the German population. Workers and peasants, craftsmen and tradesmen and even members of the bourgeoisie hoped that it would point to a way out of the misery. But there were also forces opposing the agreement which wanted to discriminate against it and tried to thwart its realization. The then Reich Chancellor Dr. Wirth said in the Reichstag, also addressing those people: "... that this Rapallo Treaty has been recognized and appreciated as the first true work of peace after the catastrophe by the workers of the entire world." And the spokesman of the social democratic parliamentary group, Hermann Müller, also admitted: "The broad masses in Germany welcomed this treaty so enthusiastically because they felt quite instinctively for the first time that this was a real peace treaty concluded by the governments of two countries which met with response in the hearts of the peoples represented by these governments."

Many German workers knew the value of good, friendly relations with the Soviet people even without these speeches. The hungry Ruhr miners and their families had themselves experienced what their Russian class brothers understood by international solidarity.

Grain for the Ruhr

An article in the Soviet newspaper *Bakinskij Rabotschij* said: "In the past one-and-a-half months there has not been one trade union meeting, conference or congress at which some form of active help for the Ruhr miners and metalworkers was not discussed. The Russian proletariat which had scarcely recovered from the horrors of the foreign occupation and overcome hunger and unspeakable privations was ready to share its last reserves with its brothers in need—faithful to the principles of international solidarity of the proletariat."

The situation of the Ruhr workers worsened from day to day and led to a downright state of emergency. Soviet grain brought help to thousands of workers and their families. "Not only German workers," the press reported, "but the entire international proletariat welcomed the delivery of 500,000 poods of grain from Russia to the Ruhr area with enthusiasm and admiration. The workers of the entire world appreciate this deed as an act of international solidarity. The more resolutely this solidarity is manifested, the sooner will the Ruhr area liberate itself from its oppressors and exploiters at home and abroad."

In connection with the grain delivery the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions called upon the workers in the Ruhr area and throughout the world. The appeal stated that the workers of the Soviet Union could not calmly stand by while German workers were hungry and suffering. "Russia still bears the traces of the imperialist plunderers. Russia is still poor and has only just begun the reconstruction of its national economy. But thinking of the help from the workers of the western countries, the Russian proletariat feels obliged to settle its debt. Russia is convinced that the workers of other, richer countries will follow its example."

This appeal ended with a call to the workers of all countries to help the German workers: "The more the workers of Britain, France, Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia struggle against their own rapacious governments, the more resolutely will the German proletariat struggle for a workers' government in Germany which will extend its hand to the workers of all countries for liberation from the yoke of capitalism."

After the end of the civil war the Soviet country had to overcome tremendous difficulties in the construction of its destroyed national economy. But it always remained faithful to the principles of proletarian solidarity and international friendship.

The German trade union association wrote to the Soviet trade unionists: "You have yourselves suffered hunger and need from the economic blockade by world capital and live under constant threat from the imperialist hangmen; and yet you share the little you have with the hungry German people. World history knows no similar admirable example of this fraternal help."

A growing number of Germans wished to get acquainted with the Soviet country. Ever more delegations visited the new state in the east on behalf of parties and mass organizations. The occasion for the journey of the first workers' delegation was unintentionally brought about by the social democratic newspaper Vorwärts. Max Girndt took part in it. Asked for his impressions decades later he told this story:

From Saul to Paul

It is more than forty years since 58 German workers set out on a journey to the Soviet Union. I had been delegated by the Upper Silesian railwaymen and at 27 was one of the youngest.

The previous history of this first German workers' delegation which travelled to the Soviet Union is very interesting. *Vorwärts*, the central organ of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) in January 1925 published an article which was allegedly written by workers of the Putilov (today Kirov) Works in which the following could be read: "The Russian working class never had as few rights as at present in Russia." This article, a malevolent libel, was translated and read to the workers of the Putilov Works. Thereupon they decided to invite German workers to see the working and living conditions after the October Revolution for themselves.

Two-thirds of the participants in this delegation were social democrats, among them a few anti-Bolshevists of the deepest dye. But the communists and non-party workers were also interested to learn what they would find there.

We spent two days in the Putilov Works. Our visit was not an inspection but was rather almost snooping. Everything was rummaged through, even the washing facilities and toilets. We had hundreds of talks with the workers. After these two days the social democrats sat down together and wrote a letter to the editors of *Vorwärts*. In it they wrote: "You are mean liars, for nothing which you wrote is true." In six weeks we saw Leningrad, Moscow and many other towns and villages. We went to the Urals, to the Crimea and the Caucasus, we inspected enterprises, recreation homes, field camps of the Red Army, nursery schools, mines, churches and even prisons where we had talks with imprisoned Mensheviks. We were shown what we wanted to see and received willing replies to every question. We obtained a deep insight into the life of the Soviet people at that time. Many a Saul among our delegates became a Paul. When we returned home again we were all sincere friends of the Soviet people. Especially important was the perception that the Russian workers have power firmly in their hands.

This trip is unforgettable to me. It helped me later to tell many people the truth about the young state. The fascists deeply resented my journey. In Buchenwald concentration camp "he was in Russia" was entered on my card, underlined in red.

It is hard to imagine the conditions under which such journeys sometimes took place. In many cases delegations had to put up with chicanery of the worst kind from the police

or customs officials, and not seldom did a visit to the Soviet Union mean dismissal without notice. Thus such journeys were restricted not only by obvious financial, but also by political considerations. Another way of becoming acquainted with the first socialist state was by way of its new culture.

The first translations of works by Gorky began to appear in Germany; they passed from hand to hand, as only a few titles were published and in very small editions. In addition to books there were films on revolutionary events in Russia. Eisenstein's production of "Battleship Potemkin" was one of the first of those films to be seen by the German public. But here, too, there were many obstacles in the way.

GDR scientist Hermann Herlinghaus spoke on this subject at a meeting of scientists in 1957 in Berlin, explaining how those obstacles were overcome.

The Film "Battleship Potemkin" Makes Its Way

On 29 April 1926 the film "Battleship Potemkin" was shown on the screen of the Apollo theatre in Berlin, in its first performance in Germany and outside Russia; it called forth a storm of applause such as that theatre had rarely experienced. All progressive critics in those days were in agreement that Eisenstein's production greatly overshadowed anything else that might hitherto have been described as a climax in the course of the 30 years of history which the film could look back upon at that time. Film experts of several authorities of the Reich, however, took a somewhat different view, and their persistent efforts to ban that and other Soviet films are eloquent testimony of this.

The Prometheus GmbH, distributors of Soviet and proletarian films established in 1926, had obtained "Battleship Potemkin" for distribution in Germany from the Soviet state film organization "Sov-Kino Moscow" in the spring of 1926 immediately after its foundation. Prometheus submitted a regular application in March 1926 for the censorship showing at the film control centre in Berlin, which was competent to decide on the release of the film for public exhibition. But before the film control centre and Prometheus had received the censorship copy, the security department of the Reichswehr Ministry had managed to get hold of it. On 17 March "Battleship Potemkin" was shown in secret in a special room of the Reichswehr Ministry, with admittance limited to the top members of the army command. In addition to the security officers, the film showing was attended by the two highest military representatives of the Reichswehr, the chief of the army command, General Seeckt, and the chief of the naval command, Admiral

Zenker. When the last pictures had been shown, the judgment of the military leaders was clear: this film, showing the rebellion of Russian seamen aboard the élite-ship of the tsarist fleet in 1905, the salvos of rifle fire by tsarist soldiery against a crowd of defenceless women, children, men and old people, and finally the irresistible solidarity of the Russian Black Sea sailors with their rebellious comrades had to be banned.

On 18 March, one day later, the Reich commissioner for the supervision of public order received a telephone call from the security department instructing him to try to have the film banned at the censorship showing.

Six days later, on 24 March 1926, the film was shown to the censors at the film control centre in Berlin. The film was banned.

Of course, the Prometheus GmbH demanded a revision of the decision by the highest film control board. The revision examination had not yet been scheduled and Senior Government Counsellor Mühleisen made good use of the time. He was no longer concerned—as at the beginning—with attempts to whitewash the prohibition in the eyes of the world as not being in conformity with the laws governing the release of films for public exhibition; on the contrary. The verdict was to be justified as a political precaution against “subversive communist activities”, in other words “Battleship Potemkin” was to be reduced in significance to mere propaganda intended to bring about a revolution to overthrow the Republic.

However ridiculous this sounded, once the senior public prosecutor and the minister of justice recognized that formula, the laws governing the public exhibition of films would become inapplicable and the court for the protection of the Republic would come into the picture. That was precisely what Mühleisen wanted. The scramble to maintain the prohibition began.

On 10 April further proceedings were held before the highest film control board. Senior Government Counsellor Mühleisen and Captain Ritter von Speck were invited by the chairman of the control board to attend as experts from the Reich Commissariat and the Reichswehr Ministry. To begin with everything seemed to be running according to their wishes.

Mühleisen began by advancing his main argument that the film showed the “Bolshevik revolution” and a “mechanism of revolution”, glorified civil war and therefore belonged before the court.

Von Speck saw the film as an attack on the Reichswehr and stressed its danger to military discipline and public order.

Nevertheless these expert opinions which were to have an explosive effect proved to

be duds. However expressly the film's danger to the state and the "incitement to revolt" were emphasized, the plaintiff's attorney showed objectively and calmly in his plea that the film showed neither preparations for revolution, nor the mechanism of revolution as alleged by Mühleisen, but rather depicted the "spontaneous act of rebellion resulting from the bad conditions" aboard a warship of the tsarist fleet. It was, he contended, the dramatic description of a historic event of the year 1905, which could hardly have been expressed in the language of imagery for the purpose of overthrowing the existing relations of power in Germany and thus the Reichswehr.

Asked by the attorney whether he seriously believed that 1,500 metres of film could shake the foundations of the Reichswehr, Captain Ritter von Speck could find no better reply than to protest against the question. The four assessors emphatically decided to revoke the ban.

The ultimate decision now lay in the hands of the head of the highest control board, Herr Seeger, who finally had to revoke the prohibition.

Thereupon an instruction was issued on 15 April prohibiting all members of the Reichswehr from seeing "Battleship Potemkin":

Order No. 1.203/26—

Soldiers of the Wehrmacht are prohibited from attending cinemas showing the film "The Year 1905" (Battleship Potemkin) until further notice. It is feared that the showing of this film will endanger military discipline.

The Chief of the Army Command, signed: Seeckt

The Chief of the Naval Command, signed: Zenker.

The film could hardly have hoped for more effective publicity. It was shown and scored a success almost unparalleled by any previous film in Germany. All performances were sold out.

The right-wing press could scarcely contain its indignation. It wrote of a "Potemkin scandal", calling upon the Berlin chief of police to ban the film. But the chief of police could only prohibit the performance of a film if it was accompanied or followed by disturbances of the public order. Since up to then there had been no incidents of that kind, provocateurs in accordance with tested methods were hired to stage unrest and demonstrations.

On 5 and 6 May a "group of young people" tried to start trouble at the Apollo Theatre in Berlin by ostentatiously clapping, bawling, whistling and yelling while the film was being shown. Despite these attempts there were no excesses, no tumult or scuffles anywhere, only excited discussions among spectators after the film.

Reports on the situation by the Reich commissioner for the supervision of public order stated that the film was well attended by people from all sections of the population and that the film was greatly applauded so that the showing periods had to be extended in the cinemas.

On 12 June, when "Battleship Potemkin" was announced for Wurttemberg and Bavaria, the reactionary government of Wurttemberg prohibited the film. The Wurttemberg commissioner in Berlin subsequently requested the highest film control board to ban the film for the whole of the Reich. This example was also followed by Hesse, Bavaria, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Thuringia.

In the meantime many persons from political and intellectual life gathered in the much frequented Berlin Picadilly Hall in the former "Haus Vaterland" on the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin to protest against the prohibition demanded by the South German ministries of the interior. The last speaker, writer Stefan Grossmann, characterized the success of "Potemkin" as a turning point in public taste and appealed to the public to organize resistance against the prohibition of this great work of art.

Circles in Wurttemberg, representatives of art, letters, the press and education, including the mayor of Heilbronn, also issued a statement against the prohibition of the film and dissociated themselves from the decision of the Wurttemberg government. In Berlin, Klabund, Max Liebermann, Heinrich Zille and many other people prominent in cultural and political life soon expressed their solidarity with the spirit of the meeting in the Picadilly Hall.

After five provincial governments had asked that the film be banned, the highest control board was forced to deal with "Battleship Potemkin" again. After hearings lasting five hours the film was again prohibited.

But the Prometheus GmbH submitted an altered version of the film to the film control centre. Although the length had been considerably reduced, with cuts in the scenes of the rising and the "Odessa steps", "Battleship Potemkin" even survived this loss of blood, without losing any essential part of its content and artistic value.

When the army's film expert, Captain von Speck, read out his previous opinion word for word from a written manuscript during the proceedings, one of the assessors demonstratively jumped up and rejected the judgement of the "expert" because of bias.

The final voting showed that the chairman, Government Counsellor Fräulein Wachenheim and three assessors were in favour of releasing the present version of the film for showing to adults and adolescents.

It was not the slight alteration of the film to make it more suitable in the eyes of the

censor that was decisive for the renewed permission to show the film. It was the invincible force of a great work of art which took possession of the heads and hearts of men, uniting their voices in protest against the machinations of ministerial bureaucracy, the guardians of public order, security departments and military authorities.

Soviet films and books were declared to be a danger to the existence of the German Reich, but not the millionaire and press king Hugenberg, who was at the same time flooding the whole of Germany with a welter of lies spread by the press, radio stations and film agencies, to the effect that the war had been lost only because the people in the hinterland had stabbed the soldiers at the front in the back. During those years seeds were being sown in Germany which were to bear fatal fruit not only for the German people, but for nearly all peoples of Europe a few years later. The Hitler party, the movement of the "national socialists" was apparently able to spring up out of nothing. Their political program had nothing in common with the German nation or with socialism.

The party of the national socialists which in 1923 consisted of no more than six members and very soon acquired almost unlimited financial resources, certainly did not found the SA (storm troops) and the SS (defence squads) because of national or social interests. They won the support of thousands of members of the petty bourgeoisie by demagogically declaring war on the trusts and monopolies, promising a land reform to the peasants, full independence and security to shop-keepers, unlimited opportunities to young people and an unprecedentedly wonderful family life to women. In reality the nazis were the vanguard of the most reactionary forces of German monopoly capital for establishing its terrorist dictatorship. The propertyless masses, having become vigilant after the recent years of German history, resisted the apparition in shining boots and brown uniforms. Hundreds of thousands of them joined the Communist Party, which struggled the most consistently against fascism.

There were hardly any members of socialist workers' parties who went over to the party of the fascists but there were leaders of social democracy who rejected the consistent struggle of the communists and the establishment of a united front with them. They spoke of the "lesser evil" and minimized the danger of the growing nazi terror.

In 1931-32 the Hitler party intensified its efforts to get power. The danger of fascism grew. The Communist Party of Germany did everything it could to bar the way of the nazis. The socialist German writer Willi Bredel (1901-1964), a close associate of Ernst Thälmann, the chairman of the Communist Party of Germany, wrote the following account of the influence and activity of Thälmann in those decisive years.

Thälmann in Paris

Ernst Thälmann opposed the imperialist warmongers in his own country and in other countries resolutely called upon the German people and all other peoples for international solidarity. He knew, and repeatedly declared to the entire people: Hitler's program means war. War would bring destruction to Germany. So this war must be prevented in order to save Germany.

But Ernst Thälmann did not restrict himself to saying this; when the war danger became ever more serious as a consequence of Hitler's policy he stepped out into the arena of the world public as a militant internationalist to repeat his warning before the entire world and at the same time show the people of Europe the only possible way in which this disaster could still be prevented, namely, through the militant solidarity of the working people in all countries.

In 1931 and 1932 the Communist Party organized powerful popular demonstrations against war in the German frontier areas on Ernst Thälmann's initiative. International frontier meetings of German, French, Polish, Dutch and Danish workers and peasants against the threatening war danger were held in Beuthen, Upper Silesia, in Königsberg, East Prussia, in Flensburg, Schleswig-Holstein, at the French and the Dutch frontiers.

But Ernst Thälmann did still more. He went to Paris and spoke to the French people. The French embassy had refused to give him a visa to enter France. He went without a visa. There are no insurmountable frontier barriers for friends of international peace.

On 31 October 1932 Ernst Thälmann stepped to the speaker's stand of the Bullier meeting-hall before 15,000 French workers and citizens and made a speech which will remain a historic document of the German spirit of peace and freedom.

Ernst Thälmann said, for example, that he had come here, "... to the town of Jean Jaurès, to bear witness for proletarian internationalism, and to accuse the capitalist governments of our two countries... On both sides of the frontier the bourgeoisie tries to pretend to the masses that the enemy of the worker is not the capitalist class in their own country with its supporters and agents, but the working people on the other side of the frontier posts. We German communists tell you French workers and working masses: Your fellow sufferers in Germany, the workers and peasants there, are not your enemy, but your natural ally. We also tell the German working people that the French workers and working people are never their enemies, but their class brothers and comrades. Nothing at all links us, representatives of the working class, with the German capitalists. Everything connects us with you, the exploited masses of the French people."

Ernst Thälmann said that the Versailles system which oppressed the peoples must fall, but not in favour of a new Versailles, this time dictated by Germany's imperialists. He concluded his speech with these words:

"Comrades, we German communists stand on outpost duty against fascism. Our struggle against the fascist dictatorship is at the same time your struggle. The solidarity alliance between us, French comrades, at the same time means a great historical responsibility for you."

German reactionaries were mad with rage at this courageous appearance of Ernst Thälmann in the French capital. The Hitler fascists abused him as a traitor to his country because he had frustrated their war plans in the world public and had advocated understanding among the peoples.

Paul Vaillant-Couturier, deputy of the Paris proletariat, wrote about peace champion Ernst Thälmann in 1936:

"When war broke out in 1914, Hitler fell on his knees and thanked God for allowing him to experience the war. The 'Führer' recounts this edifying scene in *Mein Kampf*. At the same time, the docker Ernst Thälmann of Hamburg was conducting a bitter struggle against the leaders of his trade union who were open adherents of the imperialist war. And during the entire war massacre soldier Thälmann did not for a single moment desert the cause of his anti-militarist and anti-war sentiment... When we former French front fighters made the pilgrimage to Verdun we thought with emotion of the visit which Ernst Thälmann, the former German front fighter, paid to the military cemeteries of the north after the meeting in the Bullier hall where he spoke on 31 October. It was All Saints' Day, thousands of men and women were adorning the graves of their relatives with flowers. Thälmann was deeply moved..."

"Thälmann did everything he could to save the two peoples from a new war... He never contented himself with general talk and nice phrases against war. As a cold realist he tore Hitler's demagoguery about 'Greater Germany' to pieces, disproved one false argument of the 'Führer' after the other on 'national honour'. Thälmann said:

"We must show with all necessary clarity that we can bring about the national freedom of the people without a war of conquest, without the oppression of foreign peoples. They, the nazis, are the party of revenge, we, the communists, are the party of peace!"

These words of the great French people's leader prove that Thälmann was also respected and honoured beyond the German frontiers by all progressive people as the representative of those Germans who were struggling against Hitler fascism, against the

imperialist war and for peace and the freedom of all peoples. This international confidence which Ernst Thälmann had created through his valiant, militant and truly human behaviour was stifled by Hitler in an ocean of blood with his dive bombers and tanks, by his bestial warfare, with his subjugation and extermination of the peoples and not least with the cowardly murder of Ernst Thälmann. Hitler brought unspeakable suffering upon the peoples of Europe and devastated and destroyed foreign countries and towns; he plunged the German people into the most terrible catastrophe of their thousand-year history, but what is more, he abandoned Germany to the hatred and the contempt of the whole of mankind. Up to now no man has brought greater disaster upon the world and his own people.

In 1932—the revolver war unleashed by the fascist SA and SS had created a tense atmosphere in towns and villages—Ernst Thälmann spoke to the German workers:

“We know a country where there is no fascism, where it would be unthinkable that fascist assassins can do their bloody work in the streets of the workers’ quarters as in Germany—that country is the Soviet Union.

“This country in which there is no unemployment shows the workers of all countries the great example of the revolutionary way out and the construction of socialism.

“Thus we feel most closely linked with the international proletariat in our anti-fascist struggle. The struggle against fascism is at the same time the struggle for the defence of the Soviet Union.”

Ernst Thälmann, the national freedom fighter, the international anti-imperialist and peace fighter, pointed out the tremendous work of socialist construction of the Russian people in every speech, in every essay and appeal to the German workers and he showed how the Russian people led by Lenin struggled, won and created for themselves a free, socialist state in which there is true democracy and where there is no place for warmongers, monopoly capitalists and big landowners, where no imperialist ideas are taught but the great ideas of human rights, the fraternization of the peoples and peace among all peoples are propagated.

The Hitler fascists tried to persuade the German petty bourgeoisie and peasantry that the Soviet Union was a threat to them, and that they must therefore mobilize against Russia. Hitler’s SA sang: “We want to ride against the east . . .” Hitler had written in his programmatic book *Mein Kampf* that he was predestined to pillage the east.

Reactionaries throughout the world, headed by the German fascists, lied to their people and declared that anarchy ruled in Soviet Russia, everything was topsy-turvy there, millions of people were dying of hunger, it was hell there.

Ernst Thälmann knew Soviet Russia from his own experience. Already in 1921 he had travelled through the Soviet Union, went repeatedly to Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev, had visited the new industrial works and collective farms and was also often the guest of Red Army troop units. He was in Soviet Russia for the last time in 1932.

“Crisis, decay, misery, unemployment, decline of production, ruin of the peasantry, embitterment of the masses in all countries,” Ernst Thälmann called in the Berlin Sport Palace on 11 June 1931, “only in the Soviet Union are new factories, new gigantic works of industry and agriculture, the complete liquidation of unemployment, the complete overcoming of all capitalist vestiges through the triumphal progress of socialism, through the tremendous advances in the realization of the Five Year Plan in four years.”

Hitler systematically lied to the German people about Soviet Russia—Thälmann told the German people the truth about the Soviet Union.

In the Fire of War
and in the Hell of the Camps IV

In a report delivered by the people's commissar of foreign affairs of the USSR to the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on 4 December 1929 it was stated: "In the past year we have received new proof that there are individuals, groups, organizations and even parties in Germany which have set themselves the aim of radically changing the policy of Germany to one of anti-Soviet machinations . . ." Despite this situation Soviet diplomacy at that time still made efforts for continued good cooperation with Germany.

Hitler came to power on 30 January 1933. On 31 January 1933 the French newspaper Le Figaro commented: "Seen from the international standpoint Hitler's seizure of power means a serious danger. He is the spark which can bring the powder-keg to explosion."

At the head of all anti-fascist and democratic forces the banned Communist Party of Germany carried on an underground struggle against the Hitler terror. Tens of thousands of communists, social democrats and progressive people from all strata of the population were thrown into prisons and concentration camps. Ernst Thälmann, the undaunted worker who was internationally known and respected as the leader of the German working class was also arrested.

But German communists and other upright anti-fascists did not allow themselves to be discouraged. They continued the resistance against the brutal nazi regime under unspeakably difficult conditions.

The following incident is taken from Jan Petersen's novel Our Street. The author, himself an active resistance fighter, wrote the book in Berlin in 1933-34. It is the only anti-fascist book on the underground struggle which was written inside Hitler Germany.

Incident in the Night

I was in a tight corner yesterday. I was cycling to a comrade who lives in a neighbouring district. I had to collect first-hand information about the S.A. for our paper from him. He was just having supper with his wife when I arrived. They overwhelmed me with persuasions until I joined them at the meal. We told each other of our experiences in the underground work. Discussed the coming Reichstag fire trial for a long time. The comrade told me that they had organized regular radio evenings. They had a number of groups of five or six people, who listened in to the Moscow station for news about Germany, but especially about the coming trial. Strong feeling had been aroused abroad. Well-known foreign lawyers had joined to form a committee which had decided to hold a counter-trial in England. A book containing documentary proofs was in preparation. The contents would prove quite clearly that the nazis were the incendiaries. He also

told me that two Social-Democrat comrades had offered the use of their flats and wireless sets. I told him that we were unable to organize listening-in evenings; we were surrounded by enough dangers as it was.

I learnt a lot of new facts from him, but when I finally looked at my watch it was already past ten. I hesitated. So late, and with that material? But in the end I let the air out of the front wheel of the bicycle and removed the outer tyre, wrapped the material round the inner tube, pumped up again, and drove off.

The summer night was quiet. I soon turned into a wide, lonely street. The bicycle seemed to roll along the concrete cyclists' track of its own accord. Still quite a way to go. Poor workers' hut settlements lay on both sides of the street. Coloured Chinese lanterns hung in front of a few of the huts; somewhere a mandoline was being played. In the centre of the street was a double row of trees, close by the bicycle track. Isolated benches in between. The pale green foliage seemed unreal in the light of the street lamps. How quiet it was there. In the heart of the city. I shall ride out with Käthe. We will bathe, and play about. It will be splendid. How quickly the wheels turned. My feet drove the pedals mechanically. A few lovers sat on the seats. A hasty glance revealed a dark group to the right, on the pavement. Otherwise it was like a desert. But one day things will have changed. Fright robs me of thought. Twice, three times, four times a sudden explosion. Has the tyre burst? That would be the last straw. My feet still worked the pedals. I glanced down at the tyre; it was quite all right! Something whistled past my head. Someone was calling over there. I turned round. Dark figures were running across the pavement behind me. Did they mean me? All at once I made out the words: "Stop! Stop! Stop!" I put on the brakes and jumped off the bicycle. S.A.! They've caught you! flashed through my brain. They were coming along now. Five, six, seven men, I counted. The shock paralyzed my brain. The two in front pointed their revolvers at me. My hands gripped the handle-bar of the bike.

"Why don't you pull up as soon as you are called, you swine?" shouted one of the S.A. men at me.

He still pointed his pistol at me. The metal gleamed.

". . . I didn't know . . . that you meant me . . ."

"When you are called by an S.A. man you're to stop, you swine!"

"Punch him on the jaw—punch him on the jaw!" shrieked the S.A. man nearest him. He thrust the barrel of his revolver at my chest.

"Examine him first," said the first one roughly. And to me, "Put the bike down, you swine! And stick your hands up!"

I obeyed. "Put the bike down." So they won't think of . . . My heart beat wildly, but I already had my nerves under control. They felt my breeches, especially the wide material round the knees.

"Empty your pockets!"

I did so. Not a soul in the street—If they should . . .? And if they ask me where I lived? What was I doing in this district? My brain worked feverishly. I was allowed to replace the bunch of keys, the comb, and the two handkerchieves. What could I have hidden? I was only wearing breeches and tennis shirt! Best to act as if scared; they will then be impressed by their own importance, was my anxious thought. They had forgotten the punch on the jaw in the meanwhile. But the revolvers were still there—they were standing in a semicircle round me. Did they think I'd escape? Nonsense. The one in front, on the left, seemed to be in command. Aha, a star on the collar of his uniform—a Group leader!

He thrust the butt of his revolver at my shoulder blade.

"Where have you been?"

" . . . I was with friends . . . a birthday . . ." I stammered.

He looked at me threateningly for a second. The others? Were they expecting an order?

"Go on, then!" shouted the Group leader. "Now you know! When an S.A. man calls you, you must stop immediately. Do you understand?"

"Yes," I said anxiously.

The Group leader looked at the others and grinned. He's dying of fright, said that glance. The others all grinned as well.

Let them grin, for all I care. I kept silent.

"Go on! Quick!" he shouted at me again.

I pushed the bicycle a few paces further, and then mounted. Mustn't ride off too hastily. Remain calm. They were sure to be looking after me—the material in the tyres.

The German people were drowned in an unprecedented wave of demagogic, nationalist and chauvinistic propaganda. Large-scale rearmament began. Hitler's program, first laid down in his book Mein Kampf in 1924, began to take shape: "Make sure that the strength of our folk should have its foundations not in colonies, but in the native soil in Europe . . ." whereby " . . . one has only to think of Russia and its surrounding vassal-states".

The first opportunity to exercise the attack on other nations was offered during the

years 1936–1939 in Spain, in support of the fascist General Franco. It was there that the generals of Greater Germany were able for the first time to test their weapons and obtain important strategical ground for days to come. Low-priced Spanish raw materials were a lucrative business for German industry.

The Spanish people, however, were not alone in their fight to defend their freedom and independence. Side by side with volunteers from many other countries, German anti-fascists, too, went out to help Spain. They saved the name of the German nation, buried in the soil of Guernica and other Spanish towns under the ruins wrought by Göring's air squadron of the "Condor Legion".

The following contribution was written by Willi Bredel, a German communist and writer who took part in the Spanish liberation struggle as commissar of the Thälmann Battalion.

An October Celebration in Spain

On 4 November 1936 the working-class leader Edgar André was executed in Hamburg. The news of his death was heard in the world a day later. On 6 November a battalion of German liberation fighters bearing his name stormed the Universitaria (university quarter of Madrid—editor).

On 4 November 1936 the German working-class leader Ernst Thälmann had been in prison, without indictment and without trial, for no less than 45 months; on that day the battalion which bore his name threw back the foreign legionaries across the Manzanares in a counter-attack.

The epic of the defence of Madrid began, and the International Brigades wrote glorious pages of it, indelible for all time under the headings: Universitaria, Casa de Campo, Majadahonda, Las Rozas, Jarama, Guadalajara, Alcarria and Brunete.

A year had passed since that day, a year of great victories and heavy defeats. The isolated Asturians and Basques had been defeated, but proud Madrid, bleeding from a thousand wounds, was still unconquered. As many times as Franco's troops had attempted to break into the town, they had been thrown back. As long as Madrid held out, Spain was alive and so was the rightful Republic, elected by the people.

The first anniversary of the heroic defence of Madrid coincided almost exactly with the twentieth anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. Soviet Russia sent rifles and tanks, guns and aircraft, medical supplies and food to the Spanish republicans,

and with each cartridge and each loaf of bread, greetings of fraternal solidarity. And so 7 November of that year was a double celebration; the battalion prepared to observe it in a worthy manner.

It was a time full of excitement, for it was rumoured that the battalion was to be transferred to Madrid and that the International Brigades were to march in the victory parade. Billeting officers had already left. Everyone was in a state of feverish agitation and unrestrained joyful expectation. All kitbags were packed and the order for departure was expected at any hour. All kind of talk was going around: some claimed to know that the order had already been issued; others asserted that they had already seen the trucks which were to transport us in the neighbourhood of Robres, a little place nearby.

4 November, 5 November, and still no order to move. On 6 November we were still in our positions in the Salt Steppe. The wild rumours died down; so did the high spirits among the men. *Salud* Madrid, your international brothers will not be there to celebrate the anniversary of your defence with you; but our thoughts will be with you, only with you . . .

Ignoring the rumours, Max had firmly adhered to the idea of carrying out his program. Although we were far away from the centres of great parades and festivities, the battalion was nevertheless to feel a touch of the glorious festive character of the day, even in their god-forsaken surroundings of barren wastes; twenty years of victorious socialist revolution were, after all, an occasion for rejoicing throughout the world. One year of successful defence of Madrid furthermore was an honour for all militant anti-fascists.

During the past years all of our men had celebrated this Day of the Revolution in various places in the whole world: some among the workers of Paris; the others in parades at Madrid or Barcelona; many had marched across the Red Square side by side with the workers of Moscow. Others again had taken part in the mass meetings at Stockholm or Copenhagen. During recent months they had lived through numerous battles, surviving the fever, accepting hardship and risking their lives; and now they felt like an abandoned batch of forgotten beings in the remote Salt Steppe.

Grey and lazily 7 November crept out of the dark of night, but Torralba welcomed it in its own particular way. The billowing banner of the Republic crowned the school building, and outside the hut which housed the headquarters our bright red battalion flag—a gift of the workers of Madrid—lit up the surroundings. Colourful garlands were suspended across the village road from one hut to the other, with red, blue and orange coloured Chinese lanterns dangling in the breeze. At the club entrance an over-life

size bust of Ernst Thälmann, skilfully made by two of our men, welcomed the visitor. At that time our unit numbered 446 men. After one year of fighting the names of those killed in action—1,750 in all—were inscribed on our roll of honour. Almost 1,700 had given their lives defending Madrid.

The four companies of the battalion had formed up in a square, in full battle order. Max spoke about the significance of the day for the Spanish liberation struggle; I spoke about the October Socialist Revolution. The grey steel helmets of the men matched with the grey of the November day and with their sombre faces. The bayonets on their rifles shone even without sunshine; they seemed to threaten and, at the same time, rejoice. Thousands of miles to the east the troops of the Soviet army marched to the sound of revolutionary tunes along Gorky Street and across the Red Square; squadrons of tanks clattered past the Kremlin wall and the Red Air Force roared over the city. Raise your heads, workers of all continents, the first victorious workers' state is celebrating twenty years of history. The things for which the Paris Commune had lived and died; defended by German social democrats under August Bebel in imperial Germany; for which the communists led by Ernst Thälmann conducted an underground resistance struggle, languished and died of torture in the concentration camps—those great dreams had taken concrete shape, had come to life and become reality. For the first time in the history of mankind a state existed which sent the call across the earth: "Working men of all countries, unite!" For the first time in the history of mankind a state was born which calls all pioneers of human rights and human freedom its ancestors, which cherishes as a most precious legacy all great and noble values brought forth by the human intellect, proclaiming them as a spur and pledge for even greater, even more magnificent attainments in times to come.

With a firm step the men marched along the village road which they themselves had paved, past the club house, saluting the roll of honour.

The peasants had been invited to the club house. A gramophone was playing. Bottles of wine stood on the tables. The peasants wandered through the clubrooms; marvelling, looking at the pictures in the wall newspapers, photos of the Soviet Union and of the battles of the battalion. They proudly displayed their recently acquired knowledge, carefully spelling out the words: "No Pasaran! Pasaremos!"

After the festive meal—which for once did not consist exclusively of Garbanzos but of white cabbage, potatoes and mutton—the school was inaugurated. The peasants appeared in festive attire. Martinez Prenes, the village elder, wore a velvet waistcoat and velvet jacket over his red sash, and a heavy golden watch-chain with an ivory pen-

dant; a glance at him sufficed to indicate that this was indeed a festive occasion. Mothers—most of them in long black dresses as though they were in deep mourning—led their children, dressed up like little dolls, by the hands. The most beautiful dress had been taken out of the chest and the little shoes had been polished very brightly, however worn they might have been. This hour belonged to the children. Some were shy and clung to their mothers; others were quite confident and welcomed the men like old acquaintances. Max was radiant. He stood at the entrance of the school, welcomed the school beginners, stroking the girls' hair and giving the boys a friendly pat on the shoulder. Pedro had been in charge of the installation of the school and now he stood proudly beside Max receiving the guests. With an almost unparalleled grace and charm he turned to the peasant women, inviting them to come in and inspect the classrooms.

Soon the entire school building resounded with "Oh's" and "Ah's" of amazement, the peasants clapped their hands to express their admiration. Who would have expected such a thing! These were rooms befitting young princes! The walls were whitewashed and adorned with attractive, colourful pictures. The little desks and benches were stained dark brown and the floor—scraped clean with razor blades—was shining as though with the brightness of novelty. The eyes of the children were eagerly fixed on the desks. Mugs containing hot chocolate and small plates of cakes were standing on each place; a luscious and long-missed sight. This called even the shyest little girls out of their reserve, they let go of their mother's skirts and made for one of the places.

Pedro clapped his hands and called: "Children! Take your places! From now on you will sit where you now are on every school day! But today is a holiday, and on days like this you only need to eat; lessons will begin tomorrow. You will get a cup of milk-coffee and a white roll every day—and then you will work hard and learn. Well, do you like it here?"

"Yeeees!" came the reply in a chorus of voices out of many mouths, a number of them obviously stuffed with cake. Max and I strolled from desk to desk, rejoicing with the mothers at the hearty gobbling and shining eyes of the children. Our men were crowding outside the classroom, each being eager to watch them enjoying themselves, and as they saw them, their sombre faces were lit up by broad grins.

Pedro drew Alfons into the classroom. Alfons knew some conjuring tricks which he was now asked to perform for the children. He took a coin, held it up in his hand and showed it around, then said: "Hoppla"—and the coin disappeared. It was really gone, Alfons showed the inside and outside of his hand; there was no coin in at. Then he again said: "Hoppla"—and there it was, peeping out between two fingers of his hand.

The children stared at the conjurer in bewilderment, their mouths open with surprise. Alfons then took a cigarette, held it up in his hand and then stuffed it into his left nostril until it completely disappeared. It was stuck in his nose; everyone had seen it pushed in, there could be no doubt about it. Alfons then knocked his hand against his head three times, swallowed and choked and finally pulled the cigarette out of his right ear. The children were stunned with surprise; the peasant women uttered little cries of astonishment. This was really amazing! They had never seen anything like it before. The queer things these strange men managed to do!

"Yes indeed," Pedro exclaimed with a smile, "our comrade Alfons is a great and famous magician. No one can conjure as well as he!"

We, too, had our festival, and it was a good and successful one. There was something to smoke, to eat and to drink. Our brass band played in the village and whenever Rodriguez blew a couple of notes off key on his trumpet no one minded very much, it only provided some additional amusement. Our boys strolled along the new, wonderfully smooth village road with the village girls. The children dashed about, proudly clinging to the long colourful bags of sweets which they had received at the end of their celebration.

As the night broke in the candles inside the Chinese lanterns and the two big candles—of the size of an arm—in front of the roll of honour were lit. At eight o'clock sharp all companies gathered in the large barn. Guards of honour in steel helmets and with fixed bayonets were posted at the entrance.

The men stood shoulder to shoulder in front of the red-draped rostrum, officers and soldiers. Brigade commander Richard had come to deliver the festive address. Homage was paid to those who had been killed, and messages of greetings to the workers of Madrid and to the Soviet people were adopted. And then came the announcement: "Comrade Weinert will take the floor!"

A murmuring and whispering ran along the ranks. The mere mention of his name recalled innumerable experiences of our great fight. It recalled events which had taken place not only upon Spanish soil; it called to mind demonstrations in Berlin, meetings at the Sportpalast, days of struggle in the Saar, and festive occasions in Paris and Moscow. The men had sung his songs when they had marched through Madrid to the front a year ago. His poems had accompanied them in all their battles. No one had been able to give expression to their thoughts and feelings as he had done. He was glowing with the revolutionary pathos which inspired them all. They were proud to know that their poet had become their comrade-in-arms, sharing with them all good and bad days.

Erich Weinert, in Republican uniform, slightly pale from the hardships of recent weeks, stepped up to the rostrum. If up to that moment it had not been entirely possible to rouse the hearts and souls of these men, tired by disappointments and deprivations—he did it after his first words. Magnificent days of combat arose before our minds' eye, with all the days of danger and of triumph. We felt uplifted by a profound sense of fulfilled obligations and fraternal solidarity. Even the Spanish and Catalan comrades were seized by the passionate power which radiated from each of his words. Erich Weinert built the bridge of fraternity from the south of Europe to the east, from the fighting people of Spain to the peoples of the Soviet Union.

But Spain had only been the prelude to a gruesome finale. Following the invasion of Austria by German troops, Chamberlain and Daladier, after brief talks with Hitler in Munich, sold Czechoslovakia to the fascists. From that day on the spirit of war, which had been evoked to wage a holy war against Bolshevism could no longer be restrained. In "Blitz"-campaigns the German armies were victorious in the east, north, west and south of Europe.

By 22 June 1941 Hitler felt strong enough to risk an assault against the Soviet Union. In violation of all agreements, German troops invaded that peaceful country. Up till that time fascism had already called the hatred of many peoples on itself, from that time on it was cursed by all decent-minded men and women all over the world.

The attack against the first workers' and peasants' state marked the beginning of the most heinous crime committed by the fascists. 1,710 towns, 70,000 villages, 84,000 schools and other cultural institutions, 13,000 railway bridges and 479 harbours fell victim to the fierce savagery of Hitler's hordes. The total damage to the value of 679 thousand million (old) roubles was surpassed by the irreplaceable loss of more than twenty million people.

The fascist marauders negated the most elementary principles of international law, they shot thousands of innocent Soviet citizens for no reason at all, they tore asunder families and deported civilians and prisoners-of-war to Germany for slave labour in the armament industry or for extermination to the numerous concentration camps. And yet German-Soviet friendship continued to live on in varied ways, proving its worth even under those conditions, surmounting barbed-wire and the threat of murder.

Professor Walter Barthel, himself detained for many years at Buchenwald concentration camp as a political prisoner, and member of the Committee of Anti-fascist Resistance Fighters in the GDR, presents an account in the following contribution, of the way in

which the friendship between Soviet and German anti-fascists in Buchenwald concentration camp conquered privation and death.

The Joint Struggle of German and Soviet Anti-fascists in Buchenwald Concentration Camp

The first Soviet prisoners-of-war arrived in Buchenwald on 18 October 1941. Their arrival had been indicated to us by the circumstance that five barracks had been segregated from the rest of the camp by a barbed-wire enclosure several days earlier.

Outside the entrance to barrack 7 the SS-commander had a banderole put up inscribed with the words: "Soviet POW Camp". It was in contradiction to all international conventions and usage to intern prisoners-of-war in a concentration camp. But this renewed breach of international law constituted but one among the many perpetrated by the nazi regime against the German and other peoples.

On 18 October the block seniors were called to the gate. The SS ordered them to ensure that when the Soviet POWs marched in none of the camp inmates could get in touch with them. On order of the SS the block seniors announced: No inmate is permitted to leave his block when the Soviet prisoners-of-war enter the camp.

That first transport of 2,000 Soviet prisoners-of-war to arrive at Buchenwald had lived through a foot-march which took them from the western regions of the Soviet Union across the east of Germany as far as the Ruhr basin and from there to Munich and back to Thuringia. For many weeks they had been forced to pass along a Road to Calvary.

They were given starvation rations, even the most primitive opportunities for personal hygiene were denied them and they were refused the most elementary medical aid. The purpose of this savagery was evident. Goebbels' propaganda endeavoured to "prove" with the aid of these starving, filthy, outwardly neglected people that fascist Germany was fighting against uncultured mobs and for western civilization.

In the course of the long years of camp existence we had become acquainted with many gruesome, sadistic and inhuman acts perpetrated by the nazis. But what we saw here overshadowed all previous experiences. Prisoners entered the camp, reduced to mere skeletons, in tattered uniforms and with rags around their feet instead of shoes. Many of these Soviet soldiers were no longer able to walk by themselves; yet none was abandoned, they were supported by their comrades. Glowing hatred burnt in the eyes of these emaciated phantoms, and deep contempt for their torturers was expressed in their faces.

The first station of the prisoners after their entry was the bath. There they came together with German prisoners, but there was no bridge of understanding. How could these Soviet people, who for months had only come to know fascist Germans, suddenly trust German anti-fascists?

Yet something happened then, which gave us all—the Soviet prisoners and the German camp inmates kept imprisoned by the German fascists for years—the benign certainty that the great idea of proletarian internationalism could not be strangled even by the most ferocious fascist terror.

As the prisoners-of-war were being taken to the segregated barracks, the other camp inmates broke the SS ban. They poured out of their barracks and gave to the Soviet prisoners anything a camp inmate was able to give. The last piece of bread was taken out of the locker, the cherished cigarette, destined for the rare pleasure of a Sunday smoke, a little piece of sausage, the scanty portion of margarine, an apple, a pair of socks, handkerchieves, they gave everything they had to the prisoners-of-war as they marched by.

Not long after, some prisoners went through all the barracks carrying laundry baskets: "Put in anything you can give, for our Soviet brothers!" The laundry baskets were soon filled with food and other urgently necessary requisites for a camp inmate as well as with articles of clothing.

The prisoners of all nations represented in the camp at that time took part in this grand action of solidarity—German, Austrian, Czechoslovak and Dutch prisoners of fascist Greater Germany.

The camp had to pay dearly for this action. The three seniors responsible, German communists, who had been charged with the task of preventing any contact with the Soviet prisoners were punished by 25 club-strokes on the naked buttocks. They were also transferred to the penal company which had to work in the quarry.

SS-officer Florstedt stated on the following day that the "Reds" had chosen to show solidarity with the Bolsheviks, so that the entire camp would be punished by going without food for three days. Anyone who did not like the measure was at liberty to complain to the "Reds".

Although the SS leaders used this opportunity in a renewed attempt to sow the seeds of discord among the camp inmates by instigating other prisoners against the political prisoners, their effort failed. There were no arguments among the inmates according to which it would have been better not to have undertaken any act of solidarity. On the contrary: the inmates starved full of proud disdain towards the SS thugs, inspired by the happy awareness of having done a good deed.

The German anti-fascists were Hitler's first prisoners. They experienced fascist savagery at first hand as early as in 1933. But it is a historic fact that the German anti-fascists continued the organized political struggle against fascism from the first day of their imprisonment in concentration camps and prisons. At Buchenwald concentration camp—as at other camps the German anti-fascists gave a glorious example of relentless struggle. It is beyond dispute—even by opponents of communism such as the former Buchenwald camp inmate Eugen Kogon, a bourgeois journalist, and Benedikt Kautsky, the son of the well-known Karl Kautsky—that this struggle was led by the Communist Party of Germany.

The German communists led the struggle against Hitler fascism behind the electrically-charged barbed-wire fence, in the face of watch towers manned by day and by night by guards with machine guns which were aimed at the camp, and constantly confronted by the crematorium, whose chimneys unceasingly belched forth smoke and flames. They inspired all other nationals at the camp to follow their example. They fraternally passed on their dearly-paid experiences of underground resistance work to their comrades of other nationalities.

In the course of the fascist aggression a continuous stream of people from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Italy, Yugoslavia, Poland, the Soviet Union, Rumania, Hungary, Denmark and Norway poured into Buchenwald. They had been arrested by the SS for political, ideological or so-called racial reasons, or had been deported to Buchenwald simply as slave labour. As the years went by, the German organization established permanent contacts with all these nationalities. This was a very arduous task, frequently complicated by linguistic difficulties. To begin with the justified mistrust against Germans as a whole had to be overcome. This was achieved. Gradually an international centre of anti-fascist organizations was formed at the constant risk of being denounced to the SS. This centre became known as the international camp committee, and was composed of the representatives of twelve nationalities.

The solidarity, assistance to the sick and exhausted, the protection of those threatened by murder, the petty war conducted every day with great cunning and artful tricks against the SS and their spies in prisoners' uniform—all these things served the political consolidation of people of many nationalities, creating a genuine international community of anti-fascist resistance.

During the winter of 1941–42 the prisoners-of-war lived under far worse conditions than those in the general camp. In those days the POW huts had neither tables, chairs

We taught them to prepare mass actions against the SS with calm patience. We endeavoured to enable them to understand the extremely complicated problem presented by the community life of people of many nationalities under fascist brutality. The Soviet prisoners displayed their marked Soviet patriotism, their high morale, their adamant will-power to deal annihilating blows to fascism on every day and at every hour in this joint anti-fascist resistance work.

This inspiring Soviet fighting spirit and the development of an almost unlimited variety of forms and methods of struggle may be illustrated by a few examples picked out from among the many.

In 1942 the excavations for the construction of the 13 buildings of the Gustloff works were begun. A labour command sent to work on that building site was designated "Kommando X" with a view to camouflaging the nature of the undertaking. This, of course, was ridiculous. From the first moment it was clear to us that a large armaments factory was to be built, which was situated outside the electrically-charged barbed-wire fence, but in the immediate vicinity of the camp huts. A few days later the slogan: "Kommando X, rabota nix" circulated throughout the whole camp. This slogan required no translation. Germans, Frenchmen, Italians, Dutchmen and Belgians alike all understood the meaning of the slogan and acted accordingly.

Similarly all nationalities understood the meaning of the word "pomalenku". It was certainly pronounced in many different ways, yet prisoners of all nationalities used this word to explain to each other that it was best to work slowly, as this was least exhausting and brought the least profit to the SS.

On 7 November 1944 our Soviet friends had an exceptional idea. Our international committee spread the slogan: "The Red Army is victorious!" Anti-fascists of all nationalities greeted each other with this sentence in all languages. These words were heard in the camp from dawn to dusk. After the evening roll-call tens of thousands marched away from the square. The Soviet prisoners-of-war lined the camp roads in a rigid military posture saluting us with serious, yet optimistic faces, and everyone knew that this was the salute of our Soviet friends, the salute of the Soviet people to us on the day of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

I had the opportunity to participate in a New Year celebration of our Soviet friends in 1944. It was an evening with "Grandfather Frost". As I entered the room I was struck by the audacity of our friends. They had obtained a fir tree, and at the top of it gleamed a Soviet star. What could we have done? Reproach them? Certainly not. We only reinforced the precautions to protect the celebration and we felt united with them

in the thought that this was the beginning of the year of ultimate victory against fascism. This New Year celebration, carried by a magnificent spirit of confidence was a renewed emphasis of the powerful morale of our Soviet friends. Their profound bonds with their homeland inspired us with strength, and their wonderful optimism filled the hearts and minds of our international anti-fascist committee with the firm conviction that our cause was just and that victory would certainly be ours.

The fascist laws of inhumanity, brutality and extermination were counteracted not only by the joint struggle of concentration camp inmates. At prisoner-of-war and slave labour camps as well they were unable to break or destroy the spirit of freedom. Soviet people everywhere fought against the fascists in a spirit of firm resolve and self-sacrifice. Many upright Germans stood at their side courageously and faithfully although well aware that the nazi laws punished resistance against Hitler by imprisonment and death.

The Soviet officer A. Sablukov presents the following account on joint actions by Soviet and German anti-fascists in Leipzig during the years from 1941 to 1944:

Nikolai Rumyanzev and Maximilian Hauke

After the nazis had prohibited the Communist Party of Germany Maximilian Hauke carried on underground work for the party. In 1934 he was arrested and sentenced to two years imprisonment. Shortly afterwards his wife Elsa gave birth to a son, and she visited him in prison to discuss the boy's name with him. The jailer responsible for supervising the visitors was a dyed-in-the-wool nazi who said to Hauke: "You'll find no better name than Adolf."

"Not for anything," replied Maximilian bluntly and turned tenderly to his wife with the words: "Let's call him Karl Ilych."

After his release from prison Maximilian Hauke was forced to take up odd jobs.

In the autumn of 1941 the first trains with Soviet prisoners-of-war and young people who had been deported to Germany for forced labour arrived from the occupied parts of the USSR. One of these trains was unloaded in the goods station at Leipzig-Plagwitz not far from where the Haukes lived. The wounded and exhausted soldiers and deportees clambered out of the trucks and carried the bodies of their comrades who had died during the journey to a special truck. The prisoners then had to line up and were driven through the gate of the Seidel timber works.

Maximilian, his wife and son, who was nicknamed "Lixer" by his class-mates, began to help the Soviet prisoners. The gifts of food, clothing and medicaments were soon supplemented by donations from the closer friends of the family: Karl Ritter, Rudi Mansfeld, Kurt Kunat, Charlotte Sachse, Fritz Gietzelt and others. Young Lixer smuggled the things into the camp. Nobody took any notice of him. Once he came to the fence behind which stood the huts for the prisoners-of-war and saw nearby a group of workers repairing the tram lines. Lixer hung about for a long time until he could throw the bundle he had with him over the fence.

When he had done so an old worker called him over and whispered: "You needn't be frightened of us, boy—we help the prisoners ourselves."

After about two weeks nearly all the prisoners knew Lixer and he received a friendly greeting when he went to the factory to fetch saw-dust which was used as fuel in Hauke's home.

Soviet forced labourers worked in the coal yard at Plagwitz goods station. Lixer often went there to get briquettes and made friends with the deportees. He became especially friendly with one of them whose name was Alexei, and one day Lixer invited him home.

Alexei Russitzki was slightly built, seventeen years old and hailed from Pavlograd. In the evening, as darkness fell, Lixer met Alexei at the agreed spot. A few minutes later they were at the Hauke's home. Elsa served a meal and Maximilian talked with the young man for a long time, but they had great difficulty in understanding each other. Alexei spoke very little German and Maximilian no Russian. On parting Hauke suggested another visit and Alexei said: "I shall bring another comrade with me. He is older than I and understands more German."

The next day Alexei Russitzki talked to Boris Lossinski and Taya Tonkonog about his new acquaintance. They decided to report it to Rumyanzev immediately. Nikolai Rumyanzev had started work among the prisoners soon after his arrival at Taucha near Leipzig. Together with Lossinski he had formed a group of reliable people. The nucleus of this group were Yosif Sergienko, Yulia Rumyanzeva (Nikolai's wife), Nikolai Savenko, Nikolai Gorlinko and Michael, a prisoner-of-war who was working as interpreter at the "Mitteldeutsche Motorenwerke". The main task of the group was to disrupt the production of aircraft engines in this works. After he had organized the underground work in Taucha, Rumyanzev began to build up similar groups in other camps, too. This was no easy task and Rumyanzev had often tried to establish contacts among the Germans. When he heard of the Hauke's invitation it was with great

impatience that Nikolai awaited the meeting with Maximilian that was to take place on the following Saturday.

"Nikolai made a good impression on me straightaway," said Maximilian later. "His appearance was imposing, similar to the heroes of Russian legends: tall, wide-chested, broad-shouldered and large gnarled hands."

Rumyanzev's talk with Hauke lasted until late at night. The two men did not find contact right away. Nikolai was cautious with his remarks—did he know what the German was up to? Maximilian, too, was on his guard at this first meeting.

But their relationship soon became one of full confidence in each other. Maximilian introduced Rumyanzev to the communist Karl Ritter and Lossinski to the anti-fascist physician Dr. Fritz Gietzelt. Nikolai and Boris regularly listened to Radio Moscow with them and smuggled the latest news—written on scraps of paper—into the camp.

By this time Rumyanzev and Lossinski had established contacts with about ten camps in Leipzig. They had selected a few reliable people in each one to lead the resistance groups. The leaders of the group in the camp in Antonienstrasse were Denis Pogrebnoi, Nikolai Shkola and Pavel Grebenyuk. In the camp attached to the "Hasag" armaments works the group was led by Fyodor Shkvarum and Ivan Stubba. Valentin Spiridonov and Ivan Petrov were in charge of the group in the worsted yarn mill.

There were already sixty camps in Leipzig. Rumyanzev and Lossinski made a bold decision. One day they disappeared from the Taucha camp, which was extremely unfavourably situated, and presented themselves at the "Hasag" works in Leipzig. To explain their appearance there they said: "We got separated from our transport and don't know where to go now. Can't we stay here and work?"

Nikolai Rumyanzev called himself "Nikolai Orlov" and Lossinski said his name was "Konstantin Morosov". The works' management were pleased at the idea of cheap labour and took them on. They were given works' identity cards and accommodated in the camp for "eastern workers".

This huge works manufactured guns and ammunition, and the regime in the camp was less strict than in Taucha. Important points for underground work.

Taya Tonkonog was working as interpreter in the firm of Karl Krause. She was listed as a skilled worker and as such was allowed to move freely in the city. In a short space of time Taya organized resistance groups in ten "eastern worker" camps and three POW camps.

Writing and duplicating leaflets by hand was a laborious job and took far too long. Maximilian arranged a meeting between the communist Charlotte Sachse and Nikolai

at his home. She knew how to produce leaflets in large numbers on a duplicating machine and Nikolai soon learned how to produce leaflets in this way.

The activities of the group now reached such proportions that it was no longer compatible with Nikolai's work in the factory. The group decided that Nikolai should leave the camp and the factory and devote himself entirely to the underground work. From then on Nikolai lived in the Hauke's home, the headquarters of the resistance organization.

The underground movement in Leipzig developed so favourably that Nikolai decided to prepare an armed uprising. Pistols and rifles were dismantled, smuggled out of the Hasag works, reassembled and buried by night in the environs of the city.

Some time later a meeting of the German communists was held in Hauke's home. Present, apart from Maximilian, Elsa and Nikolai, were Arthur Hoffmann, William Zipperer and Hugo Joachim. They were all members of an underground Leipzig group of the "Free Germany" National Committee headed by the former Reichstag deputy Georg Schumann.

Nikolai Rumyanzev and his friends prepared themselves for the uprising. They discussed the plan of attack and the occupation of the most important buildings in all detail. Rumyanzev wrote one leaflet after the other. One of them read: "Brothers and sisters, comrades of the Red Army now in the camps of fascist Germany! . . . let us help our fathers and brothers who are fighting at the front, let us close our ranks still more closely and destroy the enemy in the hinterland! This will speed our own liberation . . . Comrades, close ranks, form tactical groups in your camps, rise up at the first signal and annihilate the fascist hordes . . ."

The prisoners-of-war and slave labourers from other European countries—there were about ten thousand of them in Leipzig—could not read the appeal which was in Russian. Nikolai asked Maximilian and Lixer to translate it into German which many of the prisoners understood.

The "appeal to all" was addressed to the Czechs, Poles, French, Yugoslavs, Belgians, Dutch, Italians and the representatives of the other nations and called on them to be ready to fight for liberation.

In the middle of these preparations for an armed uprising Nikolai Rumyanzev was arrested. That was at the end of May 1944. At almost the same time Boris Lossinski, Taya Tonkonog, Maximilian, Elsa and Lixer Hauke, Karl Ritter, Charlotte Sachse, Dr. Fritz Gietzelt, Alexei Russitzki, Yulia Rumyanzeva, Dimitri Morosov and many others—in all about fifty people—were arrested. In his report to the Ministry of Justice the examin-

ing judge wrote: "An extremely well-organized group." He added that in the view of the head of the Leipzig Gestapo it had been planned that about 6,000 to 8,000 people were to have taken part in the uprising and attacked police stations and the weapons stores in the Hasag works under the leadership of POW Soviet officers.

In the cellars of the Gestapo the resistance fighters were brutally tortured. Lixer Hauke's left hand was broken during an interrogation. In front of the eyes of Maximilian Hauke the fascists killed a Soviet prisoner-of-war in the office of examining judge Rudolf. Taya Tonkonog was stripped naked by the Gestapo men and hung up by her hair. She was tied to chairs and beaten with a wire whip.

When Elsa Hauke was transferred from police headquarters to the Gestapo investigation prison she was put in a room in which there were other German women. They told her that a very beautiful Russian girl had been there and had been cruelly tortured. A few days earlier she had been taken for the usual questioning. She had not returned. Elsa realized that it must have been Taya Tonkonog.

After the sentences were handed down on 2 August 1944 all the Soviet comrades who had taken part in the anti-fascist resistance movement in Leipzig were sent on Himmler's orders to Auschwitz concentration camp.

The working people of Leipzig honour the memory of the fallen anti-fascists: Georg Schumann, Hugo Joachim, Arthur Hoffmann, William Zipperer and many others. Streets and squares have been named after them. One street carries the name of the founder of the International Anti-fascist Committee—Nikolai Rumyanzev.

When in September 1941 the High Command of the nazi Wehrmacht began the battle of Moscow with 78 divisions and 1,000 aircraft, Hitler believed that he would be able to review the parade of his troops on the Red Square on 7 November, the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. With a two to threefold superiority an avalanche of men and equipment was hurled against the defenders of the Soviet capital. But here the "victorious conquerors" were faced by soldiers who were passionately fighting for their socialist homeland. Their spirit of sacrifice, their morale and their selflessness balanced out the superior strength of the enemy, slowed down the avalanche and finally brought it to a standstill. Meanwhile trains with weapons, ammunition and equipment rolled to the front from the Ural Mountains and the wide areas of Siberia.

Hitler and his generals did not give up, they forged new plans. What they had not succeeded in doing in Moscow they wanted to attain a few hundred kilometres to the south. At first their operations were successful. Strong German units were even able to

advance to the Volga. But in and near Stalingrad the Soviet Army finally barred their way. Then came the decisive battle of the war. The Soviet writer Vassili Grossman, known for his book Turning Point on the Volga, wrote the following contribution:

The Great Battle

In September 1942 the guards division of General Rodimzev approached a fishermen's village on the eastern bank of the Volga opposite Stalingrad with three rifle regiments, artillery, supply columns, a medical company and provisioning units. The columns moved rapidly forward on motor lorries. Day and night the vehicles threw up thick dust in the flat Volga steppe. Things hummed and buzzed in the broad spaces, the air grew grey and heavy, the sky was covered by a reddish brown haze, and the sun hung like a dusky battle-axe above a world sinking in darkness.

The division drove towards its destination almost without a break. The water in the radiators boiled, the motors howled. During the short stops the men scarcely had time to take a sip of water and shake the worst of the dust off their uniforms. Again the command resounded: "Forward!"

Everyone was seized by this haste, soldiers, drivers, artillerymen. But for General Rodimzev the speed was still too slow. He knew that the Germans were standing close to Stalingrad. And the general repeatedly urged haste and shortened the already short breaks. His energy was communicated to thousands of his soldiers.

The road turned to the south-west. All around were gardens with low apple-trees in them. And as the division approached the Volga the soldiers saw a dark high cloud threatening disaster, heavy and black it hung above them—like death. It was not dust. The smoke of burning oil tanks rose to the sky over the northern part of the city.

Big arrows on the trees pointed the way to the Volga. On them could be read: To the crossing-point.

It was no easy matter to transport an entire division across the Volga while German pursuit planes buzzed through the sky like yellow wasps and dive bombers bombarded the bank.

Everything was loaded on river barges, ferries and other boats. "Ready?" the oarsmen asked. "Full power ahead!" the boatmen shouted, and a grey ribbon moving on the water without a sound began to grow and became ever broader. Hundreds of pairs of eyes looked tensely now at the water, now at the bank which autumn was already

turning yellow, and then they looked in the direction from where the burned city which had suffered a cruel, hard fate rose in the haze.

The air was transparent, the sky clear, and the dazzling sun pitiless. But nobody was pleased that the air was clear, that the damp coolness of the Volga caressed their dust-inflamed eyes. There was silence in the boats. Suddenly everyone looked up to the sky. "Stukas!" someone shouted.

About fifty metres from a barge a mighty foaming column of water shot skywards, then a second, a third. At the same time the German artillery opened rapid fire at the division crossing the river. Shells burst over the water's surface. Splinters struck man and vessel, wounded soldiers moaned softly, as if they wanted to conceal their pain from friends and enemies—and even from themselves.

It was a frightful sight when a heavy missile struck a small ferry-boat. A flame blazed up, dark smoke covered the boat. The impact and a long drawn-out human outcry was heard. And thousands saw heavy steel helmets being carried along on the water between tossing remains of the wooden boat. Twenty of the forty soldiers on the ferry-boat had been killed.

The crossing was continued during the night. And never, as long as there has been day and night, have people been more pleased at the falling darkness of a September night than in this one. General Rodimzev lived through it in strenuous activity.

General Rodimzev had already stood many crucial tests during the war. His division had fought near Kiev; had repeatedly broken through the encirclement and gone over from defence to attack. Vigorousness, a strong will, quick reaction, aggressive spirit, war experience and cautiousness combined with personal courage—these were the characteristics of this young general. And his qualities were communicated to the entire division.

Perhaps the general thought in that night as the last groups were being ferried across the Volga, that the friendship linking people here would help him to victory in this difficult situation.

It was difficult to get an impression of the beginning of the fighting. The division had split up. The first part, the supply troops and the heavy artillery, had remained on the eastern bank. The second and third parts advanced on the western bank in the direction of the city. But they could not form an integrated frontline because the Germans were already between the regiments which had been ferried across to the industrial centre and downstream.

In the city itself the situation was serious. The Germans reckoned that the taking of

Stalingrad could only be a question of days, perhaps even of hours. The main defence, as always in serious situations, was represented by our artillery. The Germans fought it with sub-machine-gunners. The conditions of the street fighting made it possible to steal up to the guns unnoticed and put the gun-crews out of action in a sudden attack.

General Rodimzev crossed the Volga towards morning in a motor-boat. What should the division which was to reinforce the armies standing here and defend the city do? Occupy defence positions, entrench itself in the buildings? No, anything but that. The situation was so serious that Rodimzev used another method which had already been tested near Kiev; he went over to the attack! With all his regiments, with all his means, with the entire force of his military ability and with all his might!

His soldiers were seized with bitter rage when, in the dawn of the beginning day, they saw the town that had been violated by the Germans, with its once white buildings, the broad streets and squares, the factories. The rising sun which looked like a mighty eye, bloodshot from pain and suffering, looked down on the bronze Kholsunov, on the eagle with an extended wing which towered over the collapsed building of the children's hospital, on the white figures of naked boys who had remained standing alongside the burnt-out building of the sport palace, on hundreds of silent destroyed buildings.

The Germans were not prepared for an attack; they were convinced that they would succeed in driving our troops to the bank and throwing them into the Volga.

The guards regiment under the command of Yelin began to storm, although out of touch with its two neighbouring regiments. But Yelin's guards felt the breath of the two other guards regiments close at their side, they heard their heavy tread, and the thunder of the artillery which sounded to them like the voice of a good brother. The smoke and dust of the battles showed that the guards were moving forward.

Yelin's regiment captured important buildings which had been strongholds of the Germans. Never before had such heavy and bitter battles been waged. Generally valid concepts had no place here. All the peculiarities of the theatres of war were represented here. Bushes and trees recalled the woods of White Russia, large flat spaces recalled the Don steppe. The soldiers had to fight their way forward through gardens, through churned-up earth and half-burnt and destroyed fences, almost as in one of the distant Kursk villages. This constant change called for quick wits and was a constant mental strain. Bitter house-to-house battles went on for hours, the fight was carried on in half-destroyed rooms and hall-ways; the soldiers' legs became entangled in wiring; they fought their way forward over iron bedsteads, over household and kitchen utensils.

In one building the Germans had got such a firm footing that they had to be blown

up together with the massive brickwork. Lieutenant of the Pioneers Tschermakov, two sergeants, Dubovoy and Bugayev, and the sappers Klimenko, Shukhov and Messerashvili crept forward along the collapsed walls under the heavy fire of the Germans, each carrying one-and-a-half poods of explosive charge, with sweating, dirty faces, in torn uniform blouses. Sergeant Dubovoy shouted: "Don't be afraid! We are sappers!" And Shukhov, who twisted his mouth to spit out the dust, answered: "Why? Long ago we used to be frightened."

While Yelin's guards were taking one building after the other, the other two regiments stormed a hill which is closely connected with the history of the city on the Volga. On both Russian and German maps this place is ringed with a thick circle. When the fascist troops took it they certainly sent glad tidings to the German headquarters. There this hill was called the "highest point" from which the Volga, its banks and the entire city could be seen. But in a war things that can be seen are also shot at. A terrible word, the "highest point". Guards regiments took it by storm.

Many good men lost lives in these actions, did not see father or mother, bride or wife again. Friends and relatives, and their comrades, will remember them for ever. The homeland sheds many hot tears for those who sacrificed their lives in the battle for this hill. The guards had to pay dearly in this battle. It will be called the "red" hill or the "iron" hill, for it is larded with the splinters of mines, shells and bombs, blackened from powder smoke and dotted with the steel wrecks of German tanks. But the glorious moment came when soldier Kentya tore down the German flag, threw it to the ground and trampled it underfoot.

The regiments of the division united. A struggle harder than any other had ended with success.

This was the end of the first period of the fighting of Rodimzev's division on the banks of the Volga. The front now ran in a straight, stable line. The soldiers had gained great inestimable battle experience that no war academy could ever have given them.

The second stage of the heavy battle began, the war of defence with its many unforeseen occurrences, with heavy attacks of German tanks, the attacks of the dive bombers, and the counter-attack of our troops. Not only hours, but days and weeks passed in this hell of smoke and death. Not for one minute were the guns and motors silent. The thunder of the guns, the roar of aircraft engines, the heavy detonation of rockets and motor shells became a part of everyday life—just as once the screeching of the trams, the sound of motor-car horns, the street lamps, the noise of the tractor works and the bustling of the Volga steamers had been a part of the everyday picture of the city.

At about nine o'clock in the evening we went to division headquarters. The muddy waters of the Volga were illuminated by rockets of various colours, sometimes green, then bluish-violet and suddenly red—as if all the blood shed in this great war had flowed into the Volga.

"Has the food arrived?" a soldier who stood at the entrance to a dugout asked. A voice answered in the darkness: "They've been away a long time, but they're not back yet. Either they are resting some place, or will not return at all."

The division HQ was quartered in a deep cellar which recalled the gallery of a coal mine. It was laid out with stones, supported by tree trunks, and on the ground the water gurgled—as in a real gallery. The regimental and battalion staffs had established themselves not far from here. "In case the connection is broken," a member of the staff said jokingly, "we can make ourselves understood by shouts and calls."

Life in the headquarters of the division was as usual. Here too, under the earth, everyone sits bent over the map. The wireless operator calls: "Here Luna—here Luna." The dispatch-carriers sit in a corner smoking their simple makhorka cigarettes. But one can feel that in this gallery, illuminated by little paraffin lamps, all threads from the destroyed buildings, factories, mills which have been taken by the guards division run to one man, that the questions of the commanders are directed to one man only.

The gallery, its floor, the walls, the ceiling—everything trembles from the detonations of the bombs and shells. The telephones ring, the paraffin flames flicker, and large dark shadows move on the moist stone walls. But the men here are calm. A few nights earlier the Germans were here. Dust, smoke, splinters got into the gallery, commands in a language foreign and wild to the banks of the Volga resounded out of the darkness. The division commander always remained the same in this difficult hour, calm, uttering each of his words gravely, with a somewhat mocking voice.

We talked with General Rodimzev. He said: "The division has acquired the rhythm of the battle." During our talk the telephone rang about ten times. The general scarcely moved his head and said only two or three words to the duty officer. But the entire greatness of this man lay in these short words which he seemed to utter so easily.

The general's adjutant gave the last instructions before the attack on one of the buildings still occupied by the Germans. This five-storeyed building was of great importance, from here the Germans could survey the Volga and a part of its banks.

The battle plan astonished me because of its great detail and precision. The building and all neighbouring buildings had been entered on a carefully executed drawing. The signs indicated that there was a light machine-gun in the third window of the second

storey, that snipers were posted on the third floor, and that a heavy machine-gun was mounted in one of the windows. In a nutshell—the floors, windows, front and back entrances of this house had been reconnoitred precisely.

Sharp-shooters and sub-machine-gunners took part in the attack. Regimental artillery and heavy guns situated on the opposite bank of the Volga were assigned to give supporting fire. Every arm had its definite task . . .

In the deep of the night we made our way through the city in a motor-boat, about six kilometres. The Volga foamed under the impact of German shells. Death-bringing splinters hissed through the air, our heavy bombers roared through the dark sky. Hundreds of shining-lines—blue, red white—ran to them from the German anti-aircraft batteries.

On the right bank the earth rumbled and groaned under the weight of the explosions. Earth, sky, Volga—everything—was a single flame. And one felt in his heart that here a battle was being fought for the destiny of the motherland. And our people fought selflessly, bravely and courageously in the middle of the flames.

In those areas of the Soviet Union which had been occupied by the Hitler armies, and in all the other occupied countries, the fascists faced the invisible front of the underground resistance movement. In the Soviet Union hundreds of thousands of patriots inflicted great damage on the invaders through espionage, sabotage and raids, paralyzing their fighting power. Out of individual groups a partisan army developed which carried through regular battle actions in the enemy's rear and increasingly forced the fascist army leaders to assign large troop units to protect supply lines and to fight the partisans.

Many German soldiers who had come to see that the fascist war was a crime or who had already realized this when they were sent to the eastern front left their units and gave themselves up to the partisans. Not a few of them asked to be admitted to the partisan units and fought at the side of their Soviet brothers against the occupants. The following contribution, written by Soviet journalists A. Yegorov and Y. Sergeyev, reports on this joint struggle.

With the Partisans

Motors howled along the highway, German tanks clattered by, and the noise of war advanced ever further, until it reached Moscow. But in the forests it was quiet, as quiet as in the wilderness. Marching in single-file through the snow-drifts a group of scouts of

the "Death to Fascism" partisan unit approached a village. At the last house they stopped and knocked at the door.

"We are here, mother, partisans."

A woman with a head scarf opened the door. "Come in, my sons. There are no Germans in the village. But there is one here." The woman saw the partisans reach for their weapons and added: "Leave the rifles, this German is no fascist, he is one of us."

She went into the room and called: "Vanya, the partisans are here!"

In the dark opening of a trap-door a young man in a uniform without epaulettes appeared. The partisans took a close look at him. He was no coward, had an open look and his movements were calm and sure.

"Are you the commander of the partisans?" he asked the man nearest to him. "No," replied Andrei Krassilnikov, the oldest of the group, thinking: "This fellow's not afraid at all."

Almost sinking in the snow-drifts, and still under the cover of darkness, the scouts returned to their unit. When they reached the commander's dugout the mumble of voices there hushed immediately. Ten pairs of eyes looked at the stranger, some-distrustful, others-curious, still others-hostile. The young man smiled and gave his name-Fritz Schmenkel. As if he were being hunted, so that the interpreter could scarcely comprehend the sense of his words, he explained that his father was a steel foundryman and communist, that he himself was a young communist who had been imprisoned in a concentration camp and then sent to the front and that he knew what an honest man had to fight for.

The commander of the unit, Vassilyev, stepped up to the German who was still standing in the middle of the room, took his hand and raised it to the light. All saw it—a big worker's hand, with callouses and deep cracks in the skin. "Looks like one of ours."

Vassilyev took his field-glasses from his chest and handed them to Fritz: "Your weapon for the first battle—you will be observer."

In the morning the partisan unit occupied a defence position at the edge of the village of Kurganovo. Soon a large troop of Hitlerites could be seen on the road. They were surprised by rifle and machine-gun fire and immediately fled into the scrub at the edge of the forest. The machine-gun kept them to the ground with its fire; but they stubbornly kept trying to attack. Schmenkel cold-bloodedly watched the enemy and pointed out favourable targets.

Through the field-glasses he suddenly saw a shadow moving at the side of an uprooted tree. Fritz Schmenkel crept back and said to Victor Spirin: "Give me your rifle!"

Victor shook his head in refusal, but when he saw the burning glance in Schmenkel's eye he pointed to his wounded neighbour. Fritz cautiously took the rifle out of the weak hands of the wounded man, aimed and shot. Satisfied he said: "Good!"

That was the newcomer's only shot in his first partisan battle. When the fascists had withdrawn Fritz touched the sleeve of the commander and led him to the tree. There lay a dead non-commissioned officer with the Iron Cross on his uniform blouse.

One day Fritz Schmenkel was hiding with the partisan group in a shed. They were awaiting the appearance of a punitive commando which intended to burn down the village of Komarovo. The hiss of the sledge-runners could already be heard distinctly, and the white bands on the sleeves of the policemen could be seen.

A nod: "It's time!" Hand grenades flew out of the door which had been pushed open, and the partisans stormed out of the shed. One of the first was Fritz Schmenkel. With a blow of his rifle butt he broke the hand of the officer who was drawing his pistol. Then he jabbed with his bayonet to the left and to the right. Fritz took up the German machine-gun abandoned by its gun-crew and began to fire at the fleeing Germans.

The fascists were in a rage at the bold attack. They threw reinforced punitive commandos against Komarovo. Soon the village was completely surrounded by the enemy. Two battalions of them attacked the handful of partisans defending the village. Fritz Schmenkel had taken up a position with the machine-gun in a highly situated house. The fascists aimed their fire almost exclusively at this house. The second machine-gunner was seriously wounded. The roof was burning, and dense, black smoke covered the hill, but the machine-gun fired uninterruptedly. The fascists were forced to retire without having invaded the village . . .

Spring had come. The birch trees were in bud. The rooks flew from the south to their native fields. The first snowdrops appeared in the forest glades. The partisan units of the three Vadinskoy brigades which freed the large areas of the Smolensk and Kalininsk districts in battle fitted their sounds into the symphony of spring, the flames of barracks set on fire, the exploding of burning tanks, the crash of derailed trains and blown-up bridges.

Fritz Schmenkel, who was now called "Ivan Ivanovich" in his unit, was called to the commander's dugout. Brigade HQ urgently needed a prisoner. Troop movements had been observed and also growing numbers of SS men. What were the plans of the enemy? Rumour had it that the garrisons had recently been reinforced and that sentries had been doubled and trebled. Exact information had to be procured.

"Ivan Ivanovich" was chosen. One night "Ivan", in the uniform of a fascist officer,

sneaked into the camp of the enemy. Suddenly a sentry—probably even two, yes, two . . . One of them turned and went on . . . A dull thud. The sentry fell to the ground.

"What's up?" a voice was heard. "Who's there? Kurt, is that you?"

"Idiot, don't you know your first lieutenant?" Fritz Schmenkel barked out of the dark.

"Sorry sir!" The sentry stood at attention. Schmenkel went up to him and pointed the pistol at him. "Lay your rifle down! About face! Forward march!"

Towards morning the two arrived at the partisan HQ. The captive looked at the "first lieutenant" with hatred: "So, you are helping the enemy?"

"Your enemies are not here," Schmenkel said calmly and thoughtfully, "but there." He pointed with his hand to the west. "Your enemies and mine, and those of our country . . ."

A partisan base in the dense fir forest. A song rises from around the camp fire: That is the partisan's lot.

By day and night you don't part with your gun,
allow yourself neither rest nor respite,
and the enemy no minute of life.

The short breaks passed with friendly talks, the partisans exchanged recollections and dreamed of the future.

"Time's up," Ivan Ivanovich said, "I'm on guard now." And with a rifle in his hand he stepped out into the night. "He is modest and does not like it when something good is said about him," a voice said. "Last night I met someone out of the first brigade. We started to talk, and he asked me: Isn't there a German in your unit who fights with us? Yes, I replied, what of it? Ivan Ivanovich is quite okay."

"Uncle Anton, do the fascists know this Ivan Ivanovich?" a young chap asked.

"They are looking for him in all the villages and in the forest, there is a big price on his head. The day before yesterday Semyon brought an arrest warrant which he had torn off a wall in Baturin."

Semyon rummaged in his pocket, produced the carefully folded piece of paper and began to read:

"Warrant of arrest. The following rewards will be paid for the seizure of the deserter Fritz Schmenkel, 23 years old: for a Russian, eight hectares of land, a house and a cow; for a member of the Wehrmacht 25,000 marks and a two-month leave. The military police."

"They didn't spare paper, it's good and thick but no good for rolling a cigarette," said his neighbour, taking a look at the warrant.

"Why do you carry this scrap of paper around with you, Semyon?"

"When I am home again I shall show it to my family . . ."

16 March 1943 near the town of Beli in the Kalininsk district. Schmenkel and the other partisans passionately embraced the Soviet soldiers with the red star on their caps. Now this dauntless partisan could heal his frozen feet and recuperate near Moscow.

One day he was ordered to the headquarters of the partisan units. In a little room, the walls of which were covered with maps, he was received by a grey-haired general.

He beckoned the partisan to his desk and gave him a document to read which bore the heading: Testimonial-Partisan Fritz Schmenkel. In it was written, among other things: "Comrade Schmenkel was a machine-gunner. In his unit he showed himself to be a brave, determined and disciplined partisan; he carried out all orders to the word and minute; he is highly respected among the partisans and commanders . . .

"Comrade Schmenkel has shot 150 traitors to our socialist homeland and taken three prisoners in the 14 months that he has been in the brigade. Thanks to his quick thinking, bravery and good knowledge of tactics it was possible to lead the unit out of difficult situations during action. He has covered the retreat of the unit with his machine-gun to the last cartridge . . .

"Comrade Schmenkel is politically experienced, understands much of the international situation and the aims of Germany's policy of conquest."

The general let his glance rest for a moment on the document which was signed by Colonel Bobrov, commander of the Vadinsk partisan brigade, 8 May 1943. Then he rose and said in a warm voice:

"Fritz Paulevich Schmenkel! For your bravery and your courage you have been awarded the Order of the Red Banner. I decorate you with this high distinction in the name of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR." The general pinned the medal to Fritz Schmenkel's uniform blouse . . .

We came to Berlin. We went through the streets and met many former partisans of the Vadinsk brigade, but Fritz Schmenkel was not among them. He had fallen in battle during the liberation of Byelorussia at the end of 1944.

While mighty battles were raging on all fronts of the Great Patriotic War, while partisan units were fighting under the most difficult conditions for the liberation of the Soviet Union a chapter of German history was being written in the prisoner-of-war camps in that country. At the side of Soviet communists, German patriots began explaining the criminal role of fascism to those German prisoners-of-war who had been

misled and who, to one degree or the other, were still under the influence of nazi propaganda. They referred especially to the appeal issued by the Communist Party of Germany on 24 June 1941 which set forth the causes and aims of the Hitler movement, and also detailed the way out of fascist barbarity. The men who felt themselves responsible for the re-education of the Germans in nazi uniform were such personalities as Wilhelm Pieck, Walter Ulbricht, Johannes R. Becher, Willi Bredel and Erich Weinert.

The first talks between German prisoners-of-war and German communists took place at POW camp No. 58 from 8 to 10 October 1941. As a result of these talks an "appeal to the German people, signed by 158 German soldiers" was adopted. The prudent and far-sighted contents of this appeal caused it to be circulated and discussed among German prisoners-of-war, among the German combat troops and even in Germany itself.

Germans on Soviet soil were thus given an opportunity to opt in favour of a truly humanist German policy and a future Germany that would be on the side of peace and understanding between all peoples. Even at the beginning of the attack on the Soviet Union many far-sighted Germans were convinced of the defeat of the Hitler fascists; after the battle of Stalingrad at the turn of 1942-43 their numbers increased tremendously. It is thanks to the indefatigable work of German and Soviet patriots that the "Free Germany" National Committee came into existence in July 1943. It embodied, the resistance movement of all democratic forces against the fascists. It included former soldiers, officers and generals of the Hitler army, representatives of the emigrant communists, members of the bourgeoisie, clergymen and monks, noblemen and conservatives and even national socialists who had seen the true face of nazism and broken with it. Herbert Stösslein, a foundation member of the Committee, wrote about it in retrospect: "It must not be forgotten that there were many among the POW officers, and even among the soldiers, who during their entire life, in their parents' home, at school, secondary school and college, in their vocation or at officers' courses of instruction had been educated in a spirit which contradicted everything with which they were now confronted. There was a high threshold of sentiment which long prevented many from wanting the defeat of the army whose uniform they had worn for so long and, in a certain sense, still wore."

The "Free Germany" National Committee became an important force in the struggle to end the war and for the creation of a peace-loving and democratic Germany. Its members and adherents devoted themselves completely to the noble goals of the

movement. The work of enlightenment at the front was often difficult. Other members of the National Committee crossed the frontline at its order, and risked their lives to spread anti-fascist leaflets among the German soldiers, took part in the battles of Soviet partisans, were active as scouts or fulfilled other tasks. One of these courageous men was Bernt von Kügelgen. He wrote down his experiences during one operation.

The Operation near Kiev

The Kiev operational group assembled on 16 September 1943 in the Moscow house of the National Committee. It consisted of two members of the "Free Germany" National Committee, the writer Willi Bredel and POW Lieutenant Bernt von Kügelgen, the graduates of the first course at the Central Anti-fascist School in Krasnogorsk, the POW soldiers Rudi Scholz, Georg Schnauber, Alexander Lubik and Tromsdorf. That evening the news of the liberation of the town of Novorossisk had arrived in Moscow. Salutes were fired, and thousands of flares illuminated the night sky. There was a cheerful, optimistic atmosphere at the farewell dinner which was given for the delegation by Erich Weinert, president of the National Committee. Everyone felt that the victory message was a new confirmation of the fact that the "Free Germany" movement had gone into action at the right moment. There were toasts to a free, democratic Germany and to the victory of the Red Army. The outfitting took place late in the night. In addition to the German field-blouse with black-white-red arm-band everyone received a complete Soviet uniform. For us it was more than a suitable dress for our stay at the front. We wore it as a distinction, as a proof of the confidence placed in us by the Soviet Army, as a dress of honour in the fight against fascism.

Next morning the delegation boarded the train to Charkov, an ordinary train with shining window panes and sleeping berths in the compartments for which the conductor gave out white bed-linen in the evenings. And yet it was a special train, the second train to liberated Charkov! The Soviet Army had fought the line free again after long months in which the city was occupied, and since the previous day traffic had again been rolling. We got off in Kursk. The offensive to the Dnepr had just started. The delegation and its two Soviet companions made efforts to catch up with the advancing front. Using motor-lorries transporting supplies to the front we drove westward, passing destroyed towns and ravaged villages, tank cemeteries and abandoned positions, burnt grain fields, cut-down orchards, herds of cattle which had been shot and all the other cruel charac-

teristics of the "scorched earth" of the German retreat. And more than once it was our experience that children began to weep and cling to their mothers' skirts, seeking protection, when they heard from our language that Germans were again seeking overnight accommodation in their village. They could not know that these were different Germans.

In a village west of the Dnepr the group reached the front HQ of the 1st Ukrainian Front. Soviet officers explained the situation, the advance of the armies since Stalingrad and the morale of the enemy divisions facing us. "They are war weary," the speaker said, "they are fed up with it, they fear the next winter. But they still believe in victory and in Goebbels' lies about our country, and the soldiers still obey their officers . . . Comrades," the officer said, "explain to your fellow-countrymen that there is but one salvation, the proposals of the National Committee for the immediate ending of the war. Explain that to your people," the officer repeated urgently, "you must explain every single point. Not only the soldiers, the officers on the other side must also understand it."

The evening shone through the window pane. It grew dark in the room. No one noticed it. Soviet citizens and Germans who had opposed one another in action only one or two years ago sat together in a Ukrainian farm cottage and discussed how to prevent fascism from plunging Germany into complete disaster.

Work began. Next morning a leaflet was written which informed the German troops of the arrival of the delegation from the National Committee.

"Why do you have to continue fighting although the war has long since been lost for us?" the leaflet asked. "This is the reason: Hitler drags on the lost war, sacrifices the Wehrmacht and our entire people to maintain his rule and that of the nazi bosses for some time. He fears the end of the war. He knows that the entire world will call him to account for this terrible war, and that our people will call him to account for the criminal sacrifice of millions of Germans."

And we continued to advance through the autumn. Baggage trains drove to the front. Replacement units camped by the roadside. Ammunition transports pushed the car from the road, covering everything with dust. Again the slogan was "Pryamo, pryamo" (straight ahead). And then a blue ribbon appeared beyond a broad, broad strip of meadow—the Dnepr.

The other bank was the front. A few houses of a little village evacuated by the farmers, overcrowded with soldiers, regimental and battalion staffs snuggled against the steep slope. Shells of the German artillery exploded now and then in the tops of the chestnut trees. Two more kilometres—and then began no man's land, came the invisible wall of the main battle line. Up to ten times a day the Wehrmacht had tried to overrun

it and liquidate the bridgehead on the order of General Manstein. It did not succeed. The attacks became weaker, the Soviet positions stronger.

The agitation troop of the National Committee was allotted an empty cottage. The window panes were missing. A hit had destroyed the door. The only object in the room was the big brick peasant stove. It was intact and could be heated. A hard, but warm, night's lodging was thus ensured. We found pieces of broken glass, repaired the windows, the door, made a table and stools, shovelled a protected corner for loudspeaker, battery and leads. The front-line post of the National Committee on the 1st Ukrainian Front was ready. We had entered the bridgehead with great expectations. The dash, optimism and emotion of the foundation meeting, the speech by Erich Weinert, the words of Wilhelm Pieck still resounded in us. We saw ourselves in bold operations in no man's land. We heard ourselves, with convincing arguments, in talks to new prisoners-of-war who eagerly read every sentence from our lips. We dreamed that the Wehrmacht had only waited for our word and would immediately start the fight against Hitler. At the very least we thought that our National Committee was already known to everybody on the other side. Not at all. It was only September 1943, and our front work began in a matter-of-fact style like everyday work. It was a matter of gathering experience, of testing, becoming acquainted and also attempting to gain confidence. There were no big actions of the National Committee yet, actions of which the entire front spoke as was the case in the later phases of the war. There was still preparatory work to be done. But it prepared the ground for the big actions of Korsun-Shevchenkivski, Tarnopol and Breslau.

The first thing was to inform the Wehrmacht of the existence of the National Committee and the contents of its manifesto. The National Committee and its members must become known. The aims of the movement must become the subject of conversation. Every soldier in the Wehrmacht must know that there are also Germans on the other side, the Germans of the front-line post of the National Committee who do not fight against him, but for the ending of Hitler's hopeless and criminal war. Now the hour of the trench loudspeaker has come. Every night speakers must be in the trenches of the forefront. Every night they must shout the news to the other side. Leaflets must be written. As often and as many as possible, more leaflets than the watchers on the other side can confiscate.

During the day I work out my loudspeaker broadcasts. I transcribe the manuscript with big, clear block letters on folded sheets of paper so that I can make out the text even in the feeble light of a dimmed flashlight. At nightfall we go to the front. Major Bernikov with the equipment bag, the radio technician with the cable drums, and I with the funnel shaped loudspeakers—so laden we walk through the bridgehead which is crammed with

troops and weapons. Past the heavy guns, the command posts of the company commanders—as far as to the trenches at the front where the Red Army man is on guard in front of the enemy, his tarpaulin around his shoulder.

Now and then a few shots. Now and then a distant flare over the enemy positions. The enemy? Here, before the German main battle line, this word stumbles through my thoughts. Man, don't be sentimental! Our enemy, too, as long as the soldiers on the other side follow Hitler's orders, but our brothers when they understand us and act according to our advice!

We stop in a narrow gully forming the frontline. The commander of the unit, a captain, comes to greet us. He and Major Bernikov whisper. Obviously Bernikov is explaining who I am and what we want to do. The captain looks at me with surprise. I know that look. Whenever Bernikov introduces me it appears in the eyes of the Soviet people. In it are mingled astonishment, joy at the unexpected ally and a little appraising observation as to whether this tall, blond man in the blouse of a Red Army soldier is really honest about it . . .

Russian hospitality is not forgotten even in the most forward trench. The company cook appears. A blue kitchen apron protects her uniform. Yellow stripes on the shoulder boards indicate that she is a sergeant. With a practised grip she fills plates with noodle soup in which big pieces of meat are floating. A clear liquid gurgles into the coffee cups. The captain toasts: "To a free Germany!" He says it in our language which he might have learned at school years ago.

It has become deep night. The broadcast must begin. The sergeant unpacks his equipment. We advance to the listening-post, accompanied by two Red Army soldiers. I am as excited as a sixth-form boy. My heart throbs in my breast. Will they hear us? Will they listen, too? Will they understand me? Or will they shoot at us? Perhaps they will send a raiding-party to get the speaker? All that has happened already. What then? Well, then one can no longer speak. Then there must be shooting.

In single file we cautiously feel our way through the darkness. The Red Army soldiers show us a deep tank shelter hole. The sergeant sets up the microphone at the bottom of the hole. He disappears in the night, uncoiling the cable from the drums. After a while he appears again to fetch the loudspeaker, and disappears again. Bernikov and I jump into the hole. I establish myself at the microphone, test the lamp, take the manuscript out of my coat pocket with trembling fingers. Bernikov pats me reassuringly on the shoulder. Damn it. In the winter battle near Demyansk I really had to go through more than in this night in which the two fronts seem to sleep. Have I forgotten earlier experiences at

the front? Is it the unusualness of the hour? I cannot get rid of my stage-fright. The sergeant is back again. He connects up the microphone. Bernikov nods at me, the broadcast can begin. I take three deep breaths. "Comrades of the 82nd infantry division!" I shout with full voice, and somewhere at my side it roars with tenfold strength out of the loudspeaker. "Comrades, Lieutenant Bernt von K gelgen of the 1st company, 418th infantry regiment, 123rd infantry division is speaking to you. I am speaking to you as a member of the 'Free Germany' National Committee and as special commissioner for this section of the front."

Almost every night we work at various sections of the front. The loudspeaker operations are not in vain. The prisoners taken in the last few days know about the National Committee, even if only superficially. At least they have heard of the name in conversations. We are, it seems, no longer unknown. Can more be expected in October 1943?

An offensive is impending, our group is called back to front headquarters.

We go to Darnitsa. In this suburb of the Ukrainian capital there is a camp with prisoners from the battle of Kiev. We—my Soviet companion and I—want to talk to them . . .

The time came when the heavily hit armies of Hitler Germany irresistibly flooded back, tearing everything along into the abyss of constant defeat from which there was no escape. The war returned to the country from which it had started.

In mid-April 1945 an article in Pravda, the central organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was read in all units of the Soviet Army. It stated, among other things: "The times of the fascist frenzy in Germany are nearing their end . . . The Red Army is fulfilling its great liberation mission and is fighting for the liquidation of the Hitler army, the Hitler state, the Hitler government, but it has never set itself the aim, and does not do so now, of exterminating the German people . . . The Soviet people have never put the population of Germany on the same footing as the criminal fascist clique ruling in Germany."

The Soviet Army began the last battle in the fight of the peoples against German fascism. On 21 April the first units penetrated into the suburbs of Berlin.

The First Steps
into a New Life

V

Josef Orlopp, before 1933 a leading German trade union official, experienced the last days of Hitler Germany and the first difficult months of the post-war period in Berlin. The anti-fascist who was appointed municipal councillor for trade and the crafts in May 1945 and later deputy mayor—he died in 1960—wrote about this period:

Berlin Is Saved from Starvation

May Day, the workers' international holiday, since 1933 degraded by the nazis to a comedy, passed in Berlin in 1945 under the roar of guns. Berlin's city centre completely collapsed in rubble and ashes. The economic heart of Berlin had stopped beating. The streets were covered with débris and were blocked, and the people lived and died in the cellars and bunkers. The people were hungry. The final chaos began. A world had collapsed for many Berliners. Those who had gone with the corrupters of the German people until the very last minute believed that everything was now ended. They expected the big punishment for all the outrages which had been committed in the Soviet Union and in other countries in the name of Germany.

After hard fighting against the fascist Wehrmacht which often had to be waged from building to building, from street to street, the Red Army succeeded in occupying the entire territory of Berlin on 2 May 1945.

On 8 May the fascist Wehrmacht capitulated unconditionally. The most ardently desired historical change had come. The Soviet army had freed Berlin from the Hitler tyranny and thus given us back the liberty which we were unable to achieve with our own strength. At that time our city was a vast chaotic field of rubble in which two-and-a-half million people were vegetating. A famine seemed to be inevitable for the Berlin population.

Already months before the entry of the Soviet army the supply of foodstuffs in Berlin had been irregular. Recourse to the stocks had increasingly to be made. Instead of the foodstuffs which were to be obtained on the ration cards substitutes of various kinds were issued. Supplies for the Berlin population were completely insufficient even before the fighting ended. The remainders of the commodity stocks which were not destroyed in the war actions were looted by the population itself. The lorries were destroyed in the fighting or taken by the fascist Wehrmacht which fled to the north-west. The trains were not running. Foodstuffs could not be transported on the waterways because they were blocked by destroyed bridges. Burned and destroyed cars and vehicles of all kinds blocked the streets. The tram lines had been torn out, and a

quarter of the underground railway was under water. Of the 225 bridges of the city 140 were so badly damaged that they were unusable.

Crowds of refugees moved through our city from south to north, from east to west and conversely. Dragging their few salvaged belongings with them, they moved along their way, tired and indifferent to outward impressions, not knowing whether they would ever find their home and relatives again. A picture of misery and distress! Some 2.5 million Berliners would have starved if the Soviet occupation power had not helped them. It seemed at the time that Hitler might have been right at least on one point, that after his departure the entire population of Berlin would perish. Hungry people, chiefly old people, women and children, rooted through heaps of garbage or crept into the cellars of destroyed dwellings seeking remains of foodstuffs of any kind. Potato peelings were used as food for human beings, and black-market prices reached hitherto unknown heights.

The representatives of the Soviet people helped us in this great misery. They did not retaliate or take vengeance. Only with this help was it possible to save the population from hunger.

Special thanks are due to the unfortunately prematurely deceased first city commandant of Berlin, Colonel-General Bersarin, who took over this function on 28 April 1945. In his Order No. 1 he decreed, for example, that all communal enterprises, all food shops and bakeries were to start work immediately to supply the Berlin population. From the very first the efforts of the Soviet occupation power were directed at normalizing life in Berlin again as soon as possible.

In those days I took over the function of municipal councillor for trade and the crafts and later I headed the central food office of the Municipal Council of Greater Berlin. I still recall very well the first meeting of our Municipal Council with the military commandant Colonel-General Bersarin and his officers in the central commandatura in Berlin-Lichtenberg on 19 May 1945. Every member of the Municipal Council then briefly explained how the tasks assigned to him should be solved. Colonel-General Bersarin wished us good luck in mastering the great tasks at the end of this important deliberation and appealed to the entire population of Berlin to help us in this difficult work. The members of the Municipal Council at that time were not specialists but anti-fascists, some of whom had come directly from the concentration camps, from exile, from the penitentiaries and Hitler prisons, and only a few of them had experience in communal politics. As representatives of all sections of the Berlin population and of various world outlooks they cooperated untiringly and harmoniously without sparing

themselves to make our city viable again after it had been mortally hit. Berlin was again to become a city of peaceful work. As activists of the first hour everyone had the firm will to liberate Berlin from chaos.

In the evening of 6 May 1945 military vehicles rolled through the streets of Berlin. The Red Army supplied the food shops and bakeries from its own stocks. In the meantime the details for a card index file of the inhabitants had been compiled by house stewards who had at first been appointed provisionally, for the nazis had also destroyed this index file and all statistical data of the former ration card offices before their flight. At first bread was baked, and then distributed by the house stewards in the residential buildings because there were no local rationing boards yet. The big bakeries were closed. In this time of need the bakers' craft in Berlin wrote a glorious chapter of history. People worked day and night in the small bakeries with the help of anti-fascists to be able to give the Berliners bread again. The difficulties which had to be overcome are shown in the fact that 24,000 tons of flour and 2,700 tons of food-stuffs alone were needed every month to supply the two-and-a-half million inhabitants of Berlin. This was even more difficult because the mills and other grain processing works in Berlin were almost completely destroyed. Driving-belts were lacking, and the boiler plants were without coal. The necessary specialists could not reach their work places because they lived scattered over the city which had practically no means of communication. But the enterprises were set going again with the help of all anti-fascists, men and women.

Ports, goods stations and railways were provisionally repaired under the instruction of Soviet officers, and the most important bridges were reconstructed by Soviet engineering troops for the transport of foodstuffs. The people gladly made themselves available for this work. A large number of women took part in reconstruction and worked as building assistants. In the meantime proper ration cards were printed, the local rationing boards were equipped with provisional particulars, thus ensuring a systematic, scanty supply of the people with food.

Of the about 26,000 retail food shops of 1939, 900 had been reconstructed by the end of May 1945 to supply the people with the most necessary foodstuffs. What seemed to be impossible had been made possible. The danger of starvation had been overcome through the joint untiring work of all anti-fascist forces, supported by the Soviet Army, and the first needy supply of the Berlin population with foodstuffs was ensured with the unselfish help of our Soviet friends. That was a "retaliation" which had not been expected by many Berliners. At that time large circles of the German people saw how

shamelessly they had been lied to and stirred up by the nazis and how right the anti-fascist resistance fighters had been when they made friendship with the Soviet Union their goal.

At that time the Soviet occupation power need only have left Berlin to its fate for but a few days, and our population would have starved. At that time, in the greatest need, the firm foundations of indestructible German-Soviet friendship were created. From that time on our Soviet friends helped us to build a new life.

Only on 5 July 1945, when the worst damage to the Berlin population had already been removed, did the western occupation powers come to Berlin, and on 11 July 1945 the Inter-Allied Commandantura met for the first time. At that time our city was divided into four sectors. In the Democratic Sector of Berlin Soviet friends helped us with advice and action in democratic reconstruction as they had done for the whole of Berlin since the beginning of May 1945. They promoted the anti-fascist-democratic development in every way possible. But in the western sectors efforts directed against such a development became evident already at that time.

There is scarcely a more qualified witness of the disastrous situation in the Berlin of April–May 1945 than the then Vice-Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, A. I. Mikoyan, (member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and until 1965 Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR). On 9 May he came to the seriously afflicted town, talked to the people, inspected mills, bakeries, ports, railway stations, slaughter-houses and other establishments of vital importance for supplying the population. He reported on his impressions to a correspondent of Pravda:

Don't Hit a Man When He's Down

At the end of April and the beginning of May the Soviet command received a number of reports from soldiers and officers of the Red Army on the difficult food situation of the people of the city of Berlin. In their letters and reports the soldiers and officers of the Red Army reported that the people were living in destroyed buildings, in cellars and air-raid shelters, without light, water, sewerage, that they had no stocks of food-stuffs at all and were suffering from hunger. Everywhere women, children and old people were begging for bread from Red Army soldiers and gathering in large crowds around the army field kitchens and canteens.

The people of Dresden are living under similar conditions, although the destruction is less there, and the situation is somewhat better.

These conditions in Germany induce our command to take measures to improve the foodstuffs situation of the Germans.

But that is not the only reason.

Our moral concepts and the traditions of the Soviet peoples require a humane treatment of the peaceful population of the defeated country. The great Russian General Suvorov said: As long as the enemy fights he must be beaten relentlessly, but a defeated enemy and especially the civilian population must be treated generously. And a well-known Russian proverb says: "Don't hit a man when he's down." It is true that we have smashed the Hitler army in heavy battles and occupied Berlin, but our moral concepts and our traditions do not permit us to look on the need and sufferings of the peaceful German population with indifference.

Therefore, the Soviet command, represented by Marshal Zhukov in Berlin and by Marshal Konev in Dresden, set about restoring normal life in these cities occupied by the Red Army. First the supply of the hungry population was ensured. Food rations were fixed which were higher than the scanty hunger rations during the period of Hitler rule.

The Soviet command has organized the food supply of the people of these cities through the municipal administrations of Berlin and Dresden . . .

Immediately after the end of the fighting in Berlin and Dresden troops of the Red Army set about restoring the municipal economy. Engineers and technicians of the Red Army direct the work of the Germans in the reconstruction of the power stations and water-works, the sewerage system, tramways and underground railways, the clearing of the city streets of rubble, etc. The inhabitants of these cities who were intimidated by the fascist propaganda have now seen for themselves that our troops do not take revenge on the peaceful civilian population for the bestialities committed by the Hitlerites, but treat the civilian population generously.

Many inhabitants of Berlin express their warmest thanks to the Soviet command for their care . . .

The mood of the inhabitants of Berlin is improving considerably. The people are leaving their underground accommodation, seeing daylight for the first time after many weeks and illuminated Berlin streets at night for the first time in six years.

The German people slowly began to learn the lessons from the inglorious past. Life had to go on, and it went on. From day to day a growing number of people seized pick and

shovel to remove the rubble; they went into the destroyed factories to get production going again. The first were those who had stood in the front rank in the struggle against fascism and had survived Hitler's prisons and concentration camps, and those anti-fascists who returned home after many years in exile, as well as other democratically minded people of good-will. They now wanted to build with their hands and intellect what they had dreamed of so often; another, new Germany.

On the territory of the then Soviet occupation zone the first beginnings were not only supported by the Soviet occupation authorities but in part even ordered to ensure supplies and re-establish transportation. The decisions of the victor powers of July–August 1945 in Potsdam were the foundation for all that happened in this part of Germany from the very beginning. They demanded, for example, the complete disarmament and demilitarization of Germany, the liquidation of the armament industry, the prohibition of all military and fascist organizations, the punishment of war criminals and the elimination of all economic positions of power such as trusts, monopolies, cartels and syndicates—the roots of two devastating world wars.

*The beginning of the construction of a new democratic Germany could not only be the removal of the rubble in towns and enterprises and the supply of the population with the most necessary foodstuffs. At the same time the removal of the moral decay and intellectual rubbish was urgently necessary. Walter Ulbricht wrote in his book *Zur Geschichte der neuesten Zeit* (On the History of the Most Recent Period) which was published in 1955 (Volume 1, 1st half volume): "The safeguarding of peace and the democratic transformation of Germany was unthinkable without the uprooting of the barbarous nazi ideology, without a deep-going reform of the educational system."*

The Soviet Military Administration granted decisive aid in this field, too. After it had permitted the formation of anti-fascist democratic parties and free trade unions with its Order No. 2 on 10 June 1945, it decreed the general beginning of school in Order No. 40. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany and the Central Commission of the Social Democratic Party of Germany declared in a call for the democratic school reform on 18 October 1945: "German schools must become centres of education for all the people which guarantee progress and advancement to everyone who is talented and helps to make the Germans respected by the world as a civilized nation again."

The starting of school work was extremely difficult. Along with the lack of buildings, textbooks and curricula there was a considerable lack of teachers. After the removal of active fascists two-thirds of the teachers needed were lacking in the Soviet occupation zone. The nazi teachers were replaced by old teachers who had been censured by the

Hitler authorities and also by working people with a gift for teaching. Thousands of capable workers and office employees, among them many young people, were given the most elementary training for teaching in short courses. Thus instruction could begin in almost 1,000 schools within a few months.

The beginnings of a new intellectual life also became obvious in other fields: Theatres, cinemas and concert-halls were opened. In the winter of 1945–46 instruction began step by step at the universities and colleges of the Soviet occupation zone and in Berlin. "The great works of German humanism and world culture were made accessible again to German people . . . Lessing's Nathan the Wise, Gorky's Lower Depths, Heine's poetry, the music of Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, Soviet poems, the first Soviet films which were shown . . . laid the groundwork for the German people again to become conscious of the great traditions of German culture and take up the ideas of humanity, freedom and progress." (W. Ulbricht in Zur Geschichte der neuesten Zeit)

The progressive forces of the German people needed a reliable compass for their new way. That compass was Marxism-Leninism, the only scientific theory of the laws of development of human society. The Communist Party of Germany—and after unification with the Social Democratic Party of Germany in April 1946—the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, therefore considered the dissemination of this theory to be a task of extreme importance from the very first.

In the autumn of 1945 a measure was introduced on the territory of the Soviet occupation zone which was very decisive for social conditions in the countryside, the democratic land reform. Twenty years later Berlin historian Dr. Rudolf Stöckigt wrote on this event:

The Democratic Land Reform

On an autumn day in 1945 the chief of the then Soviet Military Administration for the province of Saxony, General Kotikov, and the bourgeois democrat Professor Erhard Hübener who had been appointed president of this province after having been deprived by the nazis of political rights for twelve years drove through the countryside. During this trip they had an experience about which General Kotikov later reported as follows:

"When we saw a crowd of people at a field boundary line we stopped and went up to them. They were distributing the land of the former landowner. Suddenly, I do not recall how it happened, a woman threw her arms around me and kissed me. Me, the foreign Russian in uniform. She was quite beside herself with joy. Professor Hübener said

to me banteringly: 'I see you know the lady?' and thereupon the scene was repeated, this time with Professor Hübener in the centre. I then asked him the same question, whereupon not he but the German woman said with tears in her eyes: 'That is only because of the joy in finally having land of our own'."

In the autumn of 1945 a historic process of great social transformation in fact began in the villages of East Germany, a process which inspired ordinary people with joy. The democratic land reform which introduced the liberation of the peasants on the territory of the German Democratic Republic showed for the first time in our century what great revolutionary potentials can be made useful in joint actions of German workers and peasants for the benefit of the entire people, for the safeguarding of peace between the peoples.

The demand that big landed property should be broken up and given to those who work it was not new. It was not invented by the communists. The communists had taken up this demand of the bourgeois revolution which had been abandoned by the bourgeoisie, and made it their own in the struggle for peace and democracy which was now on the agenda in the whole of Germany. Farm workers of the village of Oppin understood this very national role of the Communist Party of Germany when they said in August 1945:

"When the Communist Party of Germany in its call of 11 June 1945 demanded the liquidation of big landed property and the distribution of the large holdings among the small peasants and farm workers we all heaved a sigh of relief, for at last somebody was standing up and really working for the interests of the farm workers and small peasants."

The workers experienced in political struggle helped to overcome much doubt, anxiety and disbelief among the rural population and thus contributed to the success of the democratic land reform.

To what extent can the democratic land reform be called a part of the struggle for the liberation of the peasants?

First, the extremely important fact must be noted that the economic and political power of the Junkers and big landowners was completely broken in the countryside (on the territory of the present German Democratic Republic—editor). Up to the conclusion of the democratic land reform 4,537 farms of fascists and war criminals (with landed property of less than 100 hectares in size) and 7,160 estates of big landowners had been expropriated. Their property of 2,649,099 hectares was transferred to the state land fund without compensation. Those social forces in the villages which had exploited and oppressed the farm workers and peasants for centuries and had plunged the nation into catastrophic wars disappeared for ever from the life of the people.

The bases of fascism and militarism in the countryside in which the "Black Reichswehr" (secret units of the Reichswehr exceeding the 100,000-men army conceded in the Versailles Treaty of 1919—editor) and other counter-revolutionary formations once gathered no longer existed. German monopoly capital lost its class allies in the countryside who had had an essential share in determining the aggressiveness and brutality of German militarism. The land used for agricultural purposes in the possession of industrial monopolies and their owners also fell under the stipulations of the land reform. By 1 October 1946, 486 enterprises with 59,618 hectares of land were transferred from these owners to the land fund without compensation.

Secondly, the democratic land reform introduced a fundamental democratic revolution in the course of which the big banks were closed. By the middle of 1946 the people freely decided to create the legal foundations for breaking up the power positions of monopoly capital in the shortest time. Thus the entire peasantry was freed from those social forces which up to then robbed and plundered them through mortgage usury, high industrial prices and in many other respects.

Thirdly, the democratic land reform returned the peasant land which had once been stolen by the princes and counts to its legal owners; the working peasants became the masters of the villages. A total of 119,121 landless peasants and farm workers received 932,487 hectares out of the land fund, and 91,155 resettlers received 763,596 hectares of land to set up independent farmsteads; 82,483 peasants with little land were allotted 274,848 hectares, 43,231 small tenant farmers received 41,661 hectares and 39,838 old farmers received 62,742 hectares of land (as a woodland supplement) out of the land fund for the enlargement of their farms into viable enterprises. In addition, 114,665 hectares of land were given to 183,261 non-agricultural workers and office employees in smaller allotments.

The addition of the families of receivers of land reform allotments shows that 1,941,951 people were directly involved in the tremendous effect of the democratic land reform. In view of these figures it is understandable how such an event influenced the people's thinking. The peasant Felix Suthau spoke for many others when he declared in October 1945 after returning home from a prisoner-of-war camp:

"I have come to your meeting directly from imprisonment. You will imagine that all this is still perfectly new for me. It is true that here and there I had already heard something of the land reform. As a peasant with one hectare of land and a bit of land which I lease I am especially glad to be given four more hectares of land as a present, so to speak."

And farm labourer Kurt Köhler supplemented his statement in the course of the meeting: "It must be said that we have to thank the liberation by the Red Army for the opportunity to become farmers."

The simple farm worker thereby uttered deep historical judgement. The Soviet Army smashed the military power apparatus of fascist German imperialism and thus offered the democratic forces of our people decisive prerequisites for their free activity. It reliably protected the democratic construction from counter-revolutionary forces at home as well as from imperialist intervention from outside. It was the class ally of all democratic forces of the German people in the struggle against imperialism and militarism. The kiss of the German farm woman for General Kotikov was fully deserved.

Now there is scarcely a West German description of the democratic land reform in which the attempt was not made to attribute it to the Soviet occupation power. Only facts help to give the lie to this.

The demand of the Communist Party of Germany for a democratic land reform met with great response among the workers and peasants. In the summer of 1945 a broad movement developed in the countryside demanding the immediate beginning of the land reform. All four existing anti-fascist democratic parties (Communist Party of Germany, Social Democratic Party of Germany, Christian Democratic Union and Liberal Democratic Party of Germany—editor) agreed to a land reform. It was the German provincial administrations which issued laws or decrees on the democratic land reform from 3 to 10 September 1945 in reply to these demands. When on 26 October 1945 the individual provincial administrations were authorized by the Soviet Military Administration to issue laws, the previously passed laws and decrees were expressly recognized.

The Soviet Military Administration adhered strictly to the allied agreements on the demilitarization and democratization of Germany. The interests of the workers and peasants who had power in the Soviet Union fully corresponded to the vital interests of the German people. This excluded any attempt, even if only in the partial field of rural policy to "export" the revolution, which is absolutely alien to the nature of scientific socialism. To be sure it required the comradely advice and support of the German anti-fascists, and we always recall with gratitude the comprehensive and unselfish aid which we received from our Soviet friends, especially in the first difficult post-war years.

Another great democratic event in 1946 was the expropriation of the war criminals and nazis in the Soviet occupation zone. GDR scientist Dr. Otto Schröder reports on this as follows:

The Judgement of the People

On 25 May 1946 the provincial leaderships of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic Union and the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions of the province of Saxony proposed to the provincial administration a referendum on the transfer of the enterprises of war and nazi criminals to the people, in accordance with Article 1 of the decree on plebiscites and referendums. The proposers submitted a bill on it and an appeal "To the People of Saxony!"

Before the end of the same day the presidium of the provincial administration met to deliberate on the bill and the request of the anti-fascist democratic parties and the trade unions. It stated unanimously that the bill submitted . . . is admissible. "The presidium unanimously confirms this statement and decides to submit the bill directly to a referendum." In accordance with the proposal the presidium of the provincial administration fixed 30 June 1946 as the day of the referendum. Dr. Kurt Fischer, the first vice-president of the Saxon provincial administration was appointed provincial leader of the referendum.

The decisive Article 1 of the "Law on the Transfer of Enterprises of War and Nazi Criminals to National Ownership" has the following text:

"The entire property of the nazi party and its organizations and the undertakings and enterprises of war criminals, leaders and active champions of the nazi party and the nazi state as well as those undertakings and enterprises which actively served the war criminals and were handed over to the Saxon provincial administration are declared to be expropriated and transferred to national ownership."

This law which was to be voted on by the population of the province of Saxony on 30 June 1946 expressed the anti-fascist, democratic character of the referendum clearly and unmistakably. In a joint appeal of the bloc parties and the trade unions the anti-fascist aims serving peace were again clearly underlined and concretely formulated. On the historic necessity of depriving the armament speculators and active nazis of power it stated: "After the frightful suffering brought upon the German people by the Hitler war it is a vital necessity for Germany that the material means of power should be taken away from the war and nazi criminals. The expropriation of the enterprises of war and nazi criminals has now become a national necessity to safeguard the peaceful work of the people and democratic construction." The appeal to the population aptly replied to the repeatedly asked question as to why nominal members of the nazi party were given back their enterprises: "Because we want to show that the big beneficiaries

of the war are to be punished and not the former small fellow-travellers. Many people are right in saying that after the First World War the Kaiser fled, but his generals and trusted rulers remained. Thus they could finance Hitler and prepare the Second World War. This time the people will take their destiny into their own hands."

This was the profound meaning of the referendum, that the people should take their destiny into their own hands in order completely to deprive the war criminals of power and put their enterprises into the service of peace and the people. The democratic act of the masses of the people themselves was to lay the foundations for a peaceful and democratic development. This important step was at the same time a milestone on the way to the genuine self-determination of the people in the east of Germany.

Otto Grotewohl (then one of the chairmen of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany—the other was Wilhelm Pieck—editor) emphasized the great national significance of the decision of the Saxon population in a speech in Bautzen on 27 June 1946 and declared: "Saxony is holding judgement for the entire German people. Germany's grave-diggers no longer have anything to say in the politics and economy of Germany."

The working class developed tremendous power under the leadership of its party and proved to be the chief motive force of the popular movement for the expropriation of monopoly capital and its fascist adherents without compensation. There were manifold proofs that it was the working class which most consistently raised its voice for the deprivation of the trust managers and active fascist forces of power and carried out its leading role. In thousands of enterprises throughout the country the workers led by the industrial workers in the big industrial centres manifested at meetings and in resolutions their will to take the power away from those who were guilty of the war. The 9,500 workers of the large power station in Espenhain, 4,500 men and women workers and office employees of the Sächsische Werke joint-stock company in Böhlen, 10,000 inhabitants of the mining town of Zwickau, the workers of Waldenburg, 49 enterprises in the Aue municipal area with 3,500 employees, 3,000 miners and their families in Oelsnitz, the AEG workers in Bautzen, their work-mates of the Siemens technical office in Leipzig, the workers of 44 large enterprises in Dresden, the workers of the large Bleichert GmbH Transportmaschinen enterprise in Leipzig, the workers of hundreds of other large enterprises and thousands of medium and small enterprises called upon the population to vote to deprive the war and nazi criminals of power on 30 June 1946.

A resolution of the building workers' trade union in Leipzig said: "For this reason the building workers in particular will do everything possible to make this referendum a victory for the democratic development in Germany against militarism and imperialism."

properly and democratically. The democratic course of the voting was not doubted or criticized by any side. On the contrary. Even the correspondent of the West Berlin *Kurier* had to admit that the heavy poll shows "... that the general interest in the referendum was very great."

A total of 3,459,658 citizens entitled to vote went to the polling stations in the 53 voting regions of the province of Saxony, i.e. 93.71 per cent of all enfranchised voters; 2,683,401 citizens, 77.62 per cent, replied in the affirmative to the question "Do you approve of the Law on the Transfer of Enterprises of War and Nazi Criminals to National Ownership?", 571,600 voters, 16.56 per cent, said "No", and 204,657 of the votes, 5.82 per cent, were invalid.

The peace after the war was different than peace had ever been in Germany before. The people knew the causes of the catastrophe, and they were becoming aware of their own power. But not everywhere in Germany could they act according to their judgement and democratic will.

The efforts of the masses of the people in the western occupation zones to expropriate the war criminals and fascists on the basis of the Potsdam decisions were systematically prevented by the occupation powers by means of intrigues, delaying tactics and—when not otherwise possible—by force. But in the Soviet occupation zone the workers took possession of the trusts, and the land of the Junkers and big agriculturists was distributed among the farm workers and resettlers. The quagmire in which nazism had been able to prosper was drained once and for all. The Soviet occupation troops respected and supported this movement since it was in accordance with the responsibility assumed by the Soviet Union in Potsdam before the world public and created the prerequisites for a democratic Germany.

In addition the USSR assumed obligations towards the German people the consequence and importance of which was often recognized only many years later in Germany and throughout the world. Thus cultural treasures which had survived the nazi barbarity and were not wilfully destroyed, stolen or destroyed in the war were sought and salvaged on the initiative of the Soviet authorities. Today it is generally known, for example, that Soviet troops rescued the paintings of the Dresden Gallery from destruction, that the paintings were taken to the Soviet Union and restored there by outstanding specialists. The master works have long since occupied their places in Dresden again and delight visitors from all over the world.

Dresden writer Ruth Seydewitz whose work is chiefly devoted to the art treasures of

her home town wrote in 1957 about the wonderful friendly act of saving the Dresden paintings.

The Return of the "Sistine Madonna"

There is a tunnel near the Rottwerndorf sandstone quarries in the vicinity of Pirna, 20 kilometres south-east of Dresden. As I stood in front of this tunnel, I thought that nothing, absolutely nothing indicated that it could tell a story of any particular significance. And yet I discovered that the events associated with it deserve to be recorded for all time. For a time it had shielded some of the most valuable treasures of world culture. The threat of their destruction by the criminal actions of the nazi leaders is one of the saddest occurrences of that period; their salvation is among the most magnificent deeds of friendship on the part of the Soviet people.

Many conversations with the local inhabitants of the area around the tunnel and the study of thick files were required before the following sad story could be written.

It was in the spring of 1945. The Second World War unleashed by German fascism had been raging for almost six years. Many German towns were threatened or had already been destroyed by the attacks of Anglo-American aircraft. The pearl among German cities, the city of arts, Dresden, was one of these towns; it had been reduced to ashes and debris on 13 February 1945.

The most valuable gem housed within the walls of Dresden was the Picture Gallery. It is true that the nazi leaders had ordered the evacuation of the gallery as early as 28 August 1939, as I was able to establish from the records; that was at a time when Hitler was still denying all allegations that he was preparing for war. Once that war had broken out, however, nothing was done beyond discussions about the provision of bomb-proof shelters to protect the valuable works of art. The paintings remained unprotected in Dresden. That was the beginning of the first sad chapter. It was not before the second half of 1942, when Reich-Governor Mutschmann yielded to the urgent warnings of art experts and issued the instruction that "the most important objects should, as a measure of precaution, be distributed among palaces in the surroundings of Dresden."

It was then that the evacuation of the art treasures was at last begun. They were distributed among forty-five palaces and manors around Dresden which were not in the vicinity of industrial plants. This evacuation concluded the first chapter of the tragic fate suffered by the Picture Gallery as a result of the Hitler war.

The second, far more tragic chapter, began towards the end of 1944, when Nazi Governor Mutschmann issued the order to evacuate all depots east of the Elbe river and to transfer the art treasures there to depots west of the Elbe, because of the advance of the Soviet Army. The new depots provided in extreme haste, were for the most part, far inferior, and alone the transporting of the paintings in those times presented great danger. One of those transports unexpectedly turned up in Dresden on 13 February 1945. The furniture van with 145 valuable paintings which parked on the terrace embankment for the night was hit by a bomb during the Anglo-American air-raid and entirely burnt out. During that same night another 42 paintings stored in the stone hall of the former residential palace, which had not been evacuated from Dresden because of their size, were also destroyed by fire.

The last and saddest chapter of the fate of the Picture Gallery during the Hitler war began after 13 February 1945, when Mutschmann issued the order to accelerate the shifting of the paintings. In the course of this operation the most valuable paintings were stored in three main depots, the Albrechtsburg in Meissen, Königstein fortress and Weesenstein castle.

At the end of March 1945, when the Nazis included the Albrechtsburg among the fortresses which were to be defended "to the last drop of blood", the Dresden art treasures stored there were evacuated in great haste. Some of them were stored in a tunnel near Grosscotta, and the rest were taken to a limestone pit at Pockau-Lengefeld near Marienberg in the western Erzgebirge Mountains.

What was the nature of the "shelter" in which the "Sistine Madonna" and many other precious works of art were accommodated?

The tunnel was closed off by a primitive wooden door. It was explained to me that this was done deliberately, so that no one would get the idea that anything as valuable as the "Sistine Madonna" was concealed behind it. But the whole shelter proved to be no less primitive than the door. In those days the Nazis had had a shed 32 metres in length erected in feverish haste. Provisional electrical heating and ventilating installations prevented the worst damage.

At the beginning of May 1945, when the retreating SS had the power station at Pirna blown up, the supply of electricity was cut off. The heating and ventilating installations in the shed were out of action.

Anyone who takes the trouble to inspect the tunnel of the Rottwerndorf sandstone works will obtain a clear idea of the lack of responsibility of the fascists, who stored Raphael's immortal "Sistine Madonna" and over 300 other irreplaceable works from

the Dresden Picture Gallery in this subterranean room, in which water dripped from the ceiling and walls and puddles formed on the floor every time it rained.

The remaining works of art from Dresden were stored under even worse conditions.

My investigations took me to the Erzgebirge, to the antiquated, almost 500-year-old limestone pit at Pockau-Lengefeld. Just before the air-raid on Dresden of 13 February 1945, SS men had inspected the pit, I was informed by the workers. They quickly had a shaft blasted. At that time the workers there had expected the arrival of further stores of ammunition, of which large stocks had already been deposited in the limestone pit. This time, however, only large boxes arrived. They were assembled in four large sheds about twenty metres in length, ten metres wide and barely as high as a room.

Then in the night of 27 April 1945 the first of many huge furniture vans appeared at the edge of the pit; it was unloaded with the aid of hastily assembled workers. It contained heavy boxes and paintings of various sizes, which arrived entirely unpacked, like a heap of worthless junk and which were sent down a primitive chute installed in a hurry to the bottom of the pit fifty-two metres below the surface. There they were put into the sheds, the doors of which were nailed up. There were no heating and ventilating installations.

The workers at the pit knew nothing about the contents of the mysterious boxes and paintings before 8 May, when the SS guards withdrew in great haste. Before their departure they had ordered that holes be drilled at all entrances to the pit and issued instructions to blow up everything as soon as "the Russians" came within sight. The nazi authorities and the former works manager had also disappeared.

The workers, left to themselves, had no intention of carrying out the criminal orders of the nazis to blow up the pit. They set about opening the sheds and suddenly stood in front of the paintings in the flickering light of a couple of miner's lamps; in addition to the damage caused by the transport, they showed clear traces of the damp atmosphere of the pit, being covered with mould and dirt and were beginning to decay.

The whole extent of the grave danger threatening the Dresden art treasures in the limestone-pit will only become evident in the light of the conditions that prevailed in Germany around 8 May 1945. In those days most Germans felt that after the total defeat everything would be lost for ever, and hardly any of the starving, homeless and desperate people aimlessly roaming the country had any interest or understanding for works of art und their preservation.

Tens of thousands of people at that time were moving from the east to the west and from the west to the east. To all these people, plunged into disaster by the Hitler war,

a crust of bread and a drop of hot soup or a warm and dry place to spend the night were far more vital than Raphael's "Sistine Madonna" or Titian's "Tribute Money", or all the art treasures in the world.

In the chaos at the end of the war, no administrative authority was concerned with the salvation of the valuable paintings deposited in the tunnel of Cotta and in the damp limestone-pit at Lengefeld, and no one did anything to preserve these irreplaceable treasures from complete destruction.

While a few Germans with a sense of responsibility were endeavouring to save the paintings, asking the Soviet commandant for help in protecting them, the Soviet administration did everything possible to find the paintings and preserve them from ruin. The work of saving them was begun immediately after the end of the war. A team of Soviet art experts and restorers worked feverishly to remove the paintings from the damp vaults and give them the first protection against further decay. The art historian Mrs. Sokolova reported that two impressions of those days in particular stand out clearly in her memory: "The one is associated with my feelings when I first discovered works of art of world historic significance in a dark pit, as my fingers felt the thoroughly soaked canvas of one of these paintings which had not even been covered with a tarpaulin. A single match carelessly thrown away would have sufficed to set fire to the entire shed with all the treasures it contained.

"The second impression which I shall never forget is the ardent enthusiasm displayed by many ordinary soldiers in carrying out the task to which they were unaccustomed . . . I still clearly recall a young officer who said to the driver of a lorry on which the paintings were taken away: 'Drive carefully, mankind will never forgive you if anything should happen!'"

Thus, the valuable treasures of the Dresden Picture Gallery were saved from destruction because Soviet officers and soldiers, brought up in a spirit of humanism and proletarian internationalism were full of respect and profound understanding for the irreplaceable works of art, even at a time, when—as Army General P. Y. Petrov expressed it—"they were still touched by the breath of battle."

In destroyed Dresden and under the conditions prevailing in Germany at that time there was no possibility of protecting the seriously damaged paintings and restoring them properly. They were therefore taken to the Soviet Union where they were carefully looked after, restored and preserved for mankind during the years preceding their return to the government of the German Democratic Republic.

"We felt profound satisfaction every time we succeeded in saving a painting," said

Soviet Professor Guber. "In our work we felt a responsibility not only towards our own people, but towards the whole of mankind. The Soviet people are happy and proud to know that they made this great contribution to the preservation of human culture, saving and restoring the works of art of the Dresden gallery."

In March 1955 the Council of Ministers of the USSR took a decision of historic significance. It decided to hand over to the German Democratic Republic the paintings from the Dresden Picture Gallery, which had been saved twice by the Soviet people. The western warmongering press tried to minimize this deed by claiming that the Soviet Union should actually have long since handed over these paintings, to which it allegedly never had any rightful claim.

This assertion is entirely unjustified. For one thing the most valuable paintings of the Dresden Picture Gallery would long since have ceased to exist if the Soviet Union had not taken steps in time to save them from complete destruction. Moreover, those who tried to minimize the significance of the return of the paintings remained silent about the fact that in earlier wars it had been considered a generally accepted right that the victor power should confiscate and keep art treasures which had fallen into its hands as booty of war. Napoleon, for example, had taken numerous valuable works of art from other countries to France after his various conquests. In the preface to a catalogue edited by Georges Lafenestre and Eugène Richtenberger on "Le Musée National du Louvre" it is stated in this connection, that "The history of the Louvre museum during the following twenty years under the directory, the consulate and the empire, records an almost uninterrupted succession of hasty work and provisional measures in the galleries as a consequence of the glorious abundance due to the victories of the French armies. Every armistice and every peace treaty was followed by the arrival of a certain number of valuable paintings in Paris, frequently in a bad condition, which were restored and then incorporated in the existing collections. The various publications which afterwards appeared on the 'Napoleon Museum' have preserved the memory of this unique collection."

The professional slanderers of the socialist Soviet Union furthermore pass over in silence the fact that the fascist occupants not only destroyed thousands of towns and villages in the regions of the Soviet Union attacked by Hitler and temporarily under fascist occupation, that they not only ravaged the country, killing millions of Soviet citizens, but that they also carried off or destroyed many valuable cultural objects, as, for example, all the art treasures of Petrodvoryets, Tsarskoye Selo, Lomonossov, in the churches of Novgorod, Pskov and many other churches and centres of art. The Soviet Union would therefore have been justified, politically and morally—in contrast to the

USA, where not a single work of art had been destroyed during the war—in demanding reparation, in accordance with international usage, for the art treasures destroyed in its country. The renunciation by the government of the USSR of this just demand and the return to the German people of the paintings and other valuable objects of art saved by the Soviet people from ruin are indeed conclusive proof of the endeavours of the Soviet peoples to preserve friendship and peace with other peoples, and eloquent proof of their confidence in the peaceful forces of the German people.

Some of the most valuable paintings of the Dresden gallery were exhibited for three months at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow. Twenty-five million Soviet citizens had expressed the desire to attend the exhibition. This was not possible even with the best of will. But the rooms of the museum were crowded day after day and ten thousand people were able to see the paintings every day. A visitor from a western country who had stood enraptured in front of the “Sistine Madonna” turned to one of the guides, asking:

“How much does this painting cost? How much does the ‘Sistine Madonna’ cost?”

The woman looked at him in surprise and then replied: “You might just as well ask how much the sun costs! Does the sun have a price? Just as the sun shines for all men, radiating joy and happiness for everyone, so does this painting exist for the joy and happiness of all mankind.”

In the salvation and restoration of the paintings of the Dresden Picture Gallery, the Soviet people gave a source of happiness to the whole of mankind.

Soviet art scholar V. Tolstoy wrote on the responsible and difficult work of restoration of the Dresden paintings:

Works of Art Twice Saved

Many Soviet people have done grand work in salvaging the paintings of the Dresden Gallery. One can rightfully say that the pictures of the Dresden Gallery were saved twice. The first time when they were rescued from the moist stone dungeons, cellars and tunnels in which the Hitler fascists had hidden them, and the second time when these valuable treasures were “given back to life” with the help of Soviet restorers and preserved for mankind.

The pictures are painted on wooden plates or canvas, less frequently on copper plates. Changing processes set in through variations of temperature and the effect of moisture

which damage the colour layer and the ground—with wood or canvas. The varnish layer crystallizes in high atmospheric humidity and becomes dull. This also happened to the paintings of the Dresden Picture Gallery after they had been removed and accommodated in store-rooms which were completely unsuitable for the purpose. When they were saved, cracks were discovered on many paintings, along with fissures in the colour layer, traces of water that had flowed down, blisters had developed in the varnish, colour and ground layers as well as tarnished spots and finally even mechanical damage, such as holes, deep scratches and others.

The restorer S. Churakov and other specialists rendered “first aid” on the spot. They pasted over these spots with tissue paper when there was a danger that the colour could come off; they removed dust and mould. The officers of the Soviet Army, L. Volinsky and V. Perevoshchikov, art historian N. Sokolova and artists N. Ponomarev and M. Volodin took part in salvaging and transporting the paintings. The paintings were carefully packed and sent to Moscow.

One of the pearls of the Dresden Gallery is Titian’s “Tribute Money”. The painting had been seriously damaged by moisture. The wooden plate on which the picture is painted was somewhat warped. The colour and ground layers had come off in part, and the picture showed cracks. The entire painted surface, especially the face of Christ, was covered with various vertical cracks. The state of the painting seemed hopeless and catastrophic. The picture had become so unrecognizable that the figures could no longer be made out.

The Soviet restorers were faced with an almost insoluble task: Titian’s famous work had to be preserved and at the same time the picture had to be given back its former aesthetic attraction and effect.

The restorers of the State Museum of Applied Art, P. T. Korina and B. M. Shakhov worked for five months under the direction of P. D. Korin, Merited Artist of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and member of the Academy of Arts of the USSR, to restore the beauty of this painting.

Much time was needed to dry the warped wooden plate on which the picture was painted. Then the restorers did a very painstaking minute work—they fastened the cracked ground which was coming off on to the wooden plate.

It seems as if this were simple work, but what perseverance was necessary in the course of months to bring even the smallest particle of the loose layer to its old place again. The other usual retouching with brush and colour was deliberately avoided. What a marvellous success, what an example of the high art of restoration. And when we now

delight in the gleaming and glowing, expressive colours of "The Tribute Money" and admire it, then every shade of colour, every line and every brush stroke is the genuine work of Titian.

In the Pushkin State Museum of Applied Art to which the paintings were taken for preservation, restorers regularly examined the paintings over a ten-year period and repaired them, if necessary. "If we had our own field hospital there in Saxony when the paintings were salvaged," P. D. Korin once said, "then we have here a complete hospital or sometimes even a sanatorium for sick paintings."

The workshop of the restorers resembled an operating-theatre: a big "operating table" with a powerful lamp with an adjustable arm hanging above it, in the wall-chest bottles with various reagents, instruments reminding of surgical ones. The procedure itself gave the impression of a surgical operation: People in white overalls bent over the "sick" picture with close attention and working cautiously with scalpel, needle and tweezers. Specialists met, made their "diagnoses" and determined the best "methods of treatment". Perseverance, patience and courage were necessary and a great expenditure of labour. Mistakes may no more be made here than in surgery.

Almost one-third of the Dresden collection of paintings went through this workshop.

Like "The Tribute Money" restoration was necessary on the pictures "Mary with the Child and Four Saints" by Titian, the paintings by Francesco Francia and Correggio, "Bathseba at the Fountain" by Rubens and many others—all of them pictures painted on wood.

Less damaged were those pictures painted on canvas because they had been doubled in the past century, that means they had been glued on to a new cloth by means of wax and resin. This prevented the inner side from getting damp, but from outside the surface was unprotected, and for this reason the varnish with which the pictures were coated was damaged. The tarnishing and the varnish layer which had cracked were repaired chemically.

On a few paintings the traces of old restorations could be discovered (clearly on the painting "Slumbering Venus" by Giorgione). Such spots were left as they were. On a few paintings there were fissures and a few spots peeling off, for example, on Murillo's painting of "St. Rodriguez" and on Lucas Cranach's "Portrait of Henry the Pious". In such cases our restorers repaired only the really damaged spots.

There have long been good examples in relations between the Soviet Union and Germany in various fields of art and culture. Since the founding of the German Democratic Re-

public close and durable links have developed out of them which embrace the whole of cultural life.

A special field which can be emphasized here is perhaps that of literature. A close, friendly relationship has developed between writers of the two countries and their readers, a relationship which fructifies literary activity and intellectual life here and there in a noteworthy way. This is shown by the following contribution by Soviet writer M. Oserov:

Soviet Writers Always Welcome

The close links between Soviet literature and progressive German authors and a broad circle of readers and theatre audiences have a long tradition.

Long before the October Revolution the great proletarian writer A. M. Gorky had exerted a powerful influence on German working-class literature. Gorky knew Germany well.

Gorky's play *Lower Depths* was first performed in Germany in 1903. The outstanding German actor Eduard von Winterstein, who played the part of Vasska Pepel wrote: "The success of *Lower Depths*, which had its première on 23 January 1903, was enormous. I have seldom seen anything like it. This play was performed at 150 German theatres, and in 1905 we celebrated the 500th performance." In 1906 another play by Gorky was performed—*Children of the Sun*. His novel *The Mother* was published as a serial in the social democratic newspaper *Vorwärts* before it appeared in a complete German edition.

"This work," the well-known German anti-fascist writer Friedrich Wolf said, "influenced all of us, and not only the writers. You will hardly find a worker who was not impressed by *The Mother*. It may truly be described as a handbook, both for writers and for workers. I always had the character of the Mother before me as I was writing the play *Floridsdorf*. Do you recall Mother Mali? Like Pelageya Nilovna she developed from an intimidated working-class mother into a revolutionary. I first read *The Mother* when I was still at school. My second meeting with this outstanding work took place in prison. Locked into a dark prison cell, we, a group of revolutionaries, were awaiting execution. We had been sentenced to death. And then, in the night, one of the communists in the death cell began enthusiastically to recite passages out of Gorky's *The Mother* from memory. The inmates of the cell also included sick people; they moved up to the man who was reciting and surrounded him. It was as though these discouraged and exhausted people were being filled with renewed strength. That night Gorky's

Mother gave us all renewed strength to continue the struggle against our enemies and oppressors . . .”

A. M. Gorky constantly followed political events in Germany until his death. In 1928 he passionately protested against the prosecution of poet Johannes R. Becher in connection with the publication of his anti-imperialist novel *Levisite*. Later Becher said: “Gorky’s protest was one of the main reasons why the court dropped the prosecution against me.”

In 1934 Gorky had turned to world public opinion with an appeal calling for the release of Ernst Thälmann who was languishing in a Nazi prison. Gorky wrote articles sharply condemning Nazi atrocities and calling upon all honest men and women to combat the criminals.

Today Gorky’s name is very popular in the GDR. A theatre in the GDR capital, Berlin, bears his name. Schools and club houses were also named after him. A museum was opened at Heringsdorf where Gorky lived in 1922. It is visited by more than 20,000 persons every year.

One of the first Soviet poets to visit Germany was Mayakovsky. During his first visit to Germany in 1922 he read his poems in the House of Arts in Berlin, in the Schubert Hall and in the Soviet embassy. In the following years Mayakovsky revisited Germany several times. He wrote down his impressions of the country in his short story *Berlin Today* and in his poems entitled *Germany*. Everything which Mayakovsky wrote about Germany testifies to his hatred of the imperialists who profit from war and at the same time of his love for the ordinary German people.

The literary work of one of the greatest Soviet prose writers, Konstantin Fedin, is closely associated with Germany. His works are widely known in the GDR. In 1914 when he was still a young man Fedin travelled to Germany to perfect his knowledge of the German language. When the First World War broke out Fedin tried to “sneak” across the frontier, but he and other Russian students were arrested and declared to be “interned civilians”. Konstantin Fedin lived in Zittau (Saxony) up to the time of the conclusion of the peace treaty of Brest, giving Russian language lessons, appearing on the stage as an actor and singing in the choir of the local theatre. Fedin gave an impressive account of the years he spent in Germany in the autobiographical story *I Was an Actor* and in the novel *Towns and Years*.

The novel *Towns and Years* by K. Fedin was first published in Berlin in 1927, and his novel *Brothers* appeared there in 1928. In May 1933 the German inquisition burnt Fedin’s books as well as the works of many progressive and humanist German writers.

After the smashing of the fascist Reich German readers again had access to the works of Fedin. In 1948 *Towns and Years* was published in a mass edition followed by *No Ordinary Summer* in 1950. The Aufbau-Verlag in Berlin is now publishing the collected works of Fedin in ten volumes.

Konstantin Fedin, Alexei Surkov, Eugen Dolmatovsky, Konstantin Simonov, Peter Pavlenko, Vassily Ashayev, Lev Sheynin, Leonid Novichenko, Vadim Sobko, Emmanuel Kasakevich and other Soviet writers have visited the GDR, spoken at readers' conferences, and taken part in discussions and debates on the development of Soviet and German literature. Soviet writers are also known in many enterprises, on building sites, in colleges and agricultural production cooperatives.

At the end of August 1958 the Tartar poet Sheyohi Mannur visited Berlin. He is writing a novel about his fellow countryman, Hero of the Soviet Union Mussa Dshalil, who was murdered in prison by the Gestapo. Earlier it was thought that Mussa Dshalil had been executed on 10 January 1944. But in 1956 it became clear from an account by the Belgian André Timmermans who had shared a cell with Mussa Dshalil that the heroic poet was still alive in August 1944 and was in Spandau prison. German writers helped Sheyohi Mannur to get in touch with the former prison chaplain G. Yuritko who had known Mussa Dshalil and talked to him before his death. G. Yuritko recounted: "I remember the poet Mussa Dshalil. I had looked him up in my capacity as Catholic priest, brought him books by Goethe and came to respect him as a calm and honourable man. He was greatly respected by his comrades in Spandau military prison . . . He was in the same cell with an engineer whose name I do not recall. Dshalil told me that the man had been sentenced to death because he had printed and distributed leaflets calling upon his countrymen not to fight against the Russian soldiers." One day the priest had taken a letter from Mussa Dshalil out of the prison and posted it to the address written on the envelope.

Through G. Yuritko the former Italian prisoner-of-war Reniero Lanfredini who had shared a cell with Mussa Dshalil was found. It turned out that he had written down his talks with Mussa Dshalil. Lanfredini confirmed that all twelve men sentenced to death, among them Mussa Dshalil, had been dragged out of the cell and murdered on 25 August.

Sheyohi Mannur was able to see in Berlin and other towns of the GDR how the literary work of Mussa Dshalil was revered and appreciated in that country. Even after he had been sentenced to death, Mussa Dshalil did not cease to believe in the revolutionary traditions and forces of the German working class. In one of his poems he wrote:

"Come with your songs,
 But sing them as you sang
 in 1919;
 Marching in columns,
 With the battle-cry 'RED FRONT!'
 Your firmly clenched fist
 raised to the skies.
 Flood Germany with sunlight,
 Conquer the night!
 Break down all barriers,
 So that the sun may rise.
 Give Thälmann the floor,
 Revive Marx and Heine!
 Arise, sons of Zetkin!
 Arise, Thälmann's comrades!
 Or have you lost faith?
 Hearken to the voice of truth,
 Make haste to open our prison doors!"*

The records of all meetings of the victor powers and newspaper reports of those days show that the Soviet Union strictly adhered to the terms of the Potsdam Agreement in every phase after the war, thereby acting in conformity with the interests of all peace-loving and democratic Germans. It resisted all tendencies towards German rearmament and uncompromisingly opposed all attempts to split Germany. It was the merit of the Soviet Union that the victor powers guaranteed the unity of the future Germany in Potsdam.

On 1 March 1945 the late US President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared:

"Our aim in the treatment of Germany is simple—we want to safeguard peace in the world, now and in the future. Only too often has experience taught that this aim cannot be attained as long as Germany is in a position to wage a war of aggression. Measures taken with a view to attaining this aim will do no harm to the German people, on the contrary, they would guard the Germans against the repetition of a destiny imposed upon them by the general staff and the kaiser's rule, and a hundred times worse by Hitler."

* Translated from the German.

Yet only nine months later Russel A. Nixon who as commissioner of the US government was charged with the decartelization of the German trusts and monopolies had to state before the US Senate Committee to investigate the participation of German trusts in war crimes: "The intensive and irresponsible efforts to instigate disunity among the four powers give rise to the suspicion that certain elements in the State Department, the Foreign Office and the French Foreign Ministry are intent upon creating a western bloc directed against the Soviet Union." And W. G. Burchett wrote in his book The Cold War in Germany that, looking back, it had been necessary for the designs of the western powers" . . . to split Germany into two halves, keep the representatives of the Soviet Union away from the conference table and throw overboard the Potsdam decisions once and for all. The first preparations for this purpose were made before the blood of allied soldiers had dried on the fields of Germany; the results began to show during the first months of the functioning of the Control Council."

Consequently the New York weekly Newsweek commented on 24 July 1947:

"Officials in Washington believe that the continuation of the present four-power rule would result in the spread of communism throughout Germany. It would be preferable to save one part of Germany for the western powers. To this end studies are being made with regard to the establishment of a separate government for West Germany." (All the above quotations have been retranslated from German.)

This was the reason why the western powers rejected under various pretexts all Soviet proposals submitted at the conferences of the Council of Foreign Ministers during the years 1946–1949 for the drafting of a peace treaty with Germany. The Moscow New Times of 24 December 1947 published the following article on the Conference of Foreign Ministers in London in December 1947:

Conspiracy Against the Unity of Germany

The failure of the London conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers which had to discuss the German question can scarcely be a surprise. Now it is finally clear that the US delegation came to the conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers with a prepared plan to thwart the negotiations. Marshall and Dulles managed to reach agreement on this point previously with the foreign ministers of Britain and France.

It is known that the policy of the British and American occupation authorities in Germany is in fact aimed at the separation of West Germany so as to transform this

territory into a colony of US imperialism and into a base for its expansion in Europe. Consequently it became the most important task of the conference of foreign ministers to take measures immediately to restore the economic and political unity of Germany. The categorical rejection of the relevant Soviet proposals made it absolutely clear how mendacious was the declaration of the directors of the American and British foreign policies that they were for the unity of Germany. Behind the demagogic assurances of Bevin and Marshall—which were meant for the public—that they wanted to reach “general agreement” on this question at the conference in reality a separatist policy was carried through which is aimed at the final division of the country . . .

The American diplomats by no means came to London with the intention of agreeing on decisions on the German question which are acceptable to all peoples interested in a lasting, democratic peace. Their speculations were of a different kind. Marshall and Bevin wanted to force decisions on the Council of Foreign Ministers which would have granted the American and British monopolies the liberty to plunder Germany. They wanted to utilize the London session for the sanctioning of the policy pursued by them in West Germany which is aimed at thwarting the decisions made in Potsdam and Yalta on reparations and on the demilitarization and democratization of the country.

Nothing has come of these speculations. The Soviet Union which has repeatedly proved that it strives for sincere international cooperation will never permit a policy drawn up behind the scenes of imperialist deals at the expense of the interests of the European peoples and international security to be forced upon it. The Soviet Union cannot be forced to sanction a policy which damages the cause of peace, which is inspired by the imperialist plans of American and British imperialism and disguises the criminal intentions of the warmongers. The American and British delegations undoubtedly foresaw this when they set course on frustrating the negotiations and the preparation of a peace treaty with Germany.

Acting on the lines of a plan on which they had agreed before, Marshall, Bevin and, hidden behind their backs, Bidault, withdrew from a matter-of-fact discussion of the questions. All attempts of the Soviet delegation to direct the discussion into matter-of-fact channels were rejected in the most provocative way. In this case the delegations of the western powers even threw aside the usual demagoguery and openly showed that they are not willing to observe the agreements of Potsdam and Yalta, and that they do not intend to bind themselves by new quadrilateral agreements. The three delegations appeared in a united front against the reparations to the Soviet Union and conducted the entire discussion on the reparations question in a spirit and tone which was clearly

unacceptable to the Soviet Union because they obviously pursued the plan to shift the responsibility for the failure of the negotiations on to the Soviet delegation . . .

Furthermore the representatives of Britain and the USA withdrew from a matter-of-fact discussion of the Soviet proposals for the creation of an all-German government, economic departments and a German consultative council in Berlin.

The western powers did not want to admit the participation of the German people in the decision on their future state structure. They refused to receive the delegation elected by the All-German People's Congress which had arrived in London to set forth to the Council of Foreign Ministers the opinion of the German people on this question.

Nor was the Soviet proposal for the immediate preparation of a peace treaty with Germany accepted. Finally, Marshall declared that he considered it useless to discuss the remaining questions on the agenda—on the provisional political organization of Germany, on the implementation of the earlier demilitarization decisions and other questions—and proposed to adjourn the Council of Foreign Ministers . . .

Gross misrepresentation of the Soviet standpoint, the falsification of facts, the incorrect interpretation of the precise and unequivocal Soviet proposals, a malevolent campaign in the press—all means were used to disorient public opinion and veil the unsavoury role played by the British and American diplomats who were thwarting the peace settlement for Germany . . .

It is absolutely clear that the British-American conspirators, although they succeeded in frustrating the London conference, could not carry through another very important part of their plan, namely, to shift the responsibility for the failure on to the Soviet delegation. It was impossible to conceal from public opinion its straightforward and sincere attitude and its universal efforts to come to agreement with the western powers. It is furthermore impossible to conceal the fact that the Soviet Union works for the principles of a democratic peace, and that this is the reason for the fundamental differences of opinion between the Soviet policy and the policy of the British and American monopolies represented at the conference by Bevin and Marshall. Naturally the Potsdam Agreement is burdensome to those who want an imperialist peace. For this very reason they thwart the negotiations on the German peace treaty.

The American and British press which predicted the failure of the negotiations on the German question even before they had begun now reveals that the conference was deliberately frustrated in a provocative way. Thus the *New York Times* on 17 December published a United Press report in which it was stated that the department of architecture of Harvard University has for four months been preparing projects for the reconstruction

of Frankfurt-on-Main as the capital of West Germany. "The failure of the London Conference did not come unexpectedly to official circles of the USA," declared Dr. Walter Gropius, director of the department of architecture of Harvard University who in August had been told of the urgency of the plan for a new Frankfurt since the conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers would not reach agreement.

When Bevin challengingly doubted if the Council of Foreign Ministers was the proper instance at all for settling the German question he revealed that his and Marshall's coordinated policy was not oriented on cooperating with the Soviet Union on questions of a peace settlement.

With the frustration of the London Conference of the Council of Foreign Ministers the preparation of a democratic peace with Germany also failed. This is at the same time indubitable proof of the regrettable circumstance that the USA, Britain and France had decided to give up international cooperation among the big powers. The further development of events confirms this: The press of the entire world reported at length about the preparations pursued in West Germany to create a puppet government and on impending three-power negotiations on the German question.

The narrow-minded, selfish interests of a numerically trifling clique of capitalist magnates—through the efforts of their political hangers-on—were given preference over the creation of a durable peace and the extension of international security. The imperialist intentions of this clique oppose the longing of millions of people who shed their blood in the struggle against fascism and put the patience of the masses of the people to a hard test . . .

(retranslated from the German)

Side
by Side VI

7 October 1949 is rightfully called a historic day in the life of the German people, and a turning-point in the history of Germany and Europe. The German Democratic Republic was founded on this day—after Germany had been split on 7 September 1949 by the formation of the West German Federal Republic. For the first time a workers' and peasants' state came into existence in the homeland of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, August Bebel, Karl Liebknecht and Ernst Thälmann. From the very beginning, the interests of the working people were the highest commandment for the government of the GDR.

The new state which was headed by Wilhelm Pieck as president and Otto Grotewohl as prime minister felt itself closely linked with the world's first socialist state power, the Soviet Union.

In his inaugural speech before the highest people's representative body, the People's Chamber, President Wilhelm Pieck declared on 11 October 1949:

"The Soviet Union has granted the German people great and inestimable aid in all the years that followed the defeat of the Hitler power; materially by supplying foodstuffs, machinery and other factory equipment, by passing on their rich experiences in planned economic construction, and politically by making democratic reforms possible in all fields of life, in the creation of a democratic system. Now it gives us the chance, nationally, to develop a foreign policy of our own and prove our will to democratic and peaceful cooperation with the other peoples. The events of the past days have made it clear to all honest Germans that only a policy of sincere friendship with the Soviet Union can guarantee the unity and freedom of Germany, peace, and the economic and cultural upsurge of the German people . . ."

It was, of course, not possible to copy exactly the path taken by the Soviet Union. New ways and means, corresponding to the way of life of the German people, their economy and cultural life, had to be found. But there were, nevertheless, many valuable experiences in the construction and management of a workers' and peasants' state—that had been made by every Soviet works manager, every team leader in a large enterprise and by every collective farmer—which could be used by the working people of the GDR. Consequently many GDR citizens made ever more frequent use of Russian books, learned the Russian language and took an active interest in the cultural life and history of that country. And, in addition to this, there were the inter-state relations in the economic, scientific, technical and cultural spheres that became increasingly closer.

There is much for which the people of the GDR have to thank the government and peoples of the USSR.

What was at first more or less unilateral aid and help from the Soviet Union increasingly developed into genuine cooperation between the two countries to the mutual benefit and advantage of both. This cooperation has deep roots in the close relations between a large number of enterprises and institutions. The following is an example of the comradely relations between the miners of Krivoy Rog in the USSR and the miners of Mansfeld in the GDR. It was written by M. Oserov.

Krivoy Rog–Mansfeld

Today it is difficult to find a large enterprise or a town in the Soviet Union which does not maintain relations with enterprises of the German Democratic Republic. Their mutual relations lead not only to contacts in questions of production, they also lead to the formation of firm friendship among the working people.

Let us take the example of the miners of Krivoy Rog. More than half the iron ore needed by the German Democratic Republic comes from the deposits around Krivoy Rog. GDR industry on its part delivers first-class machinery and equipment to Krivoy Rog. The fraternal friendship between the miners of Krivoy Rog and the working people of the German Democratic Republic has its special tradition.

1921. The battles of civil war were raging in Soviet Russia. Disorder prevailed in the country, hunger and distress in many areas. One of the miners of the Dzierzynski mine brought a new newspaper. We read it during the midday break. Attention centred around an article entitled "Miners' Strike in Mansfeld". It said that the Mansfeld miners were no longer willing to endure the cruel exploitation and oppression and had gone on strike. In reply, the government of the Weimar Republic sent troops against them. But the miners remained firm.

Now it is hard to recall who was the first to make the proposal. At any rate the workers decided unanimously to help the Mansfeld miners. Despite the fact that they were not exactly prospering themselves, they worked a few Sunday shifts and with the payment received bought food and sent it to the miners who were striking in Germany. The German workers expressed their thanks for the help. The Mansfeld miners wrote: "Our families were hungry. Suddenly your parcels with food arrived."

A former worker from the Dzierzynski mine, the old-age pensioner Yefrosinya Vassilyevna Barabash, recalls what joy this letter evoked among the miners. The workers continued the correspondence. Some time before the October celebrations in 1928 the Krivoy

Rog miners sent their German comrades a red flag as a symbol of friendship and working-class solidarity.

The years of fascism came. The Gestapo knew that the Mansfeld workers had hidden the Soviet banner but they could not find it. The communist Otto Brosowski had plastered the flag into the wall of his house. The Hitler fascists arrested this upright party official and inhumanly tortured him. Brosowski remained silent. A fascist court sentenced him to ten years in prison.

Summer 1945. The Soviet Army came to Mansfeld. The workers welcomed their liberators with the flag of Krivoy Rog. At their head strode an emaciated exhausted man—Otto Brosowski. The miner died shortly afterwards from the consequences of the years in prison. Now the flag of the Soviet friends waves in front of the Mansfeld workers on May Day, 8 May—the day of the liberation—and at the celebrations of the October Revolution. It is carried by the widow of Comrade Brosowski and his son Otto.

After the war the Krivoy Rog miners renewed the friendship with the Mansfeld miners. This friendship is dear to the workers of Krivoy Rog and to all Soviet people.

In the autumn of 1955 a delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR visited the Mansfeld region. The comrades from the German Democratic Republic led the deputies of the Supreme Soviet to the shaft which bears the name of Otto Brosowski and then to the clubhouse where the red banner of Krivoy Rog is kept. The deputies made the acquaintance of production innovators Zoitmann and Engel who make use of the experiences of the best Soviet workers and attain high yields.

The workers of the Mansfeld mining area also visited their friends in Krivoy Rog. Otto Brosowski junr., spoke at a meeting in the palace of culture of the Dzierzynski mine. "My Soviet friends," Otto said, "my father told me before his death: my entire life was connected with the flag of our friends from Krivoy Rog. Should you be lucky enough to meet them convey my fraternal miner's greeting to them. And so, dear friends, I stand before you and fulfil his wish."

The first integrated metallurgical works of the new Krivoy Rog began operations on the eve of the 42nd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. This event called forth great joy among the working people of the German Democratic Republic. It also contained something from their work, for a part of the equipment of the integrated works had been supplied by GDR enterprises. During the celebrations commemorating the revolution a representative of Krivoy Rog, G. P. Buivol, visited Mansfeld. He was the guest of the miners at the Otto Brosowski shaft, and told them about the new metallurgical works.

The friendship between the miners of Krivoy Rog and Mansfeld stimulated German and Soviet writers. In 1959 a novel by Otto Gotsche dedicated to the theme of friendship between the miners of Krivoy Rog and Mansfeld appeared in the GDR. The book is entitled *The Banner of Krivoy Rog*. Soviet writers and journalists have also taken up this theme several times.

The economic cooperation between the miners and metallurgists of the Kerch industrial area and the metallurgists of the German Democratic Republic began in 1959. The first transports with high-grade concentrated ore from Kamysh-Burunsk were sent to the GDR. This was the beginning of the regular supply of the German Democratic Republic with processed ore from Kerch.

"At first the machine-builders of the German Democratic Republic gave us first-rate conveying bridges for open cuts and multi-shovel excavators thanks to which we were able to increase our ore production," said the workers of the Kamysh-Burunsk integrated iron ore works, "and now we send you our products. Increase the production of metal with them, this will strengthen the whole socialist community."

So think all Soviet people who work on contracts for the fraternal socialist countries. When the German Democratic Republic needed oil-boring equipment it received help from the machine-builders of Aserbaidshan. The factories of Bakinsk produced machines, plant and other equipment at short notice. GDR contracts are also fulfilled by enterprises in Moscow, Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, Charkov and other towns. The working people of the German Democratic Republic, for their part, consider it their duty to deliver goods of the highest quality to the USSR on the scheduled dates. Friendship is expressed in deeds, in mutual assistance.

Soviet journalist D. Novoplanski reports on an outstanding act of friendship which was a really heroic deed:

Twenty-one Hard Days

At daybreak a gas eruption of tremendous force took place with a deafening roar from a depth of one thousand metres. This happened at the end of July 1959 near the town of Langensalza in the GDR, at the "Kirchheiligen 5" bore hole. The pipes flew asunder, were twisted and deformed into a metal lattice tower. The four-ton rotor was lifted eight metres high, as if it were a toy. Some of the pipes stuck fast in the opening of the bore hole. It seemed as if the frightful eruption of bluish gas would blow the boring installation

up to the clouds. No one could approach it. Every day more than a million cubic metres of gas, a precious fuel which was so necessary for the country, escaped into the air. A frightful fire could break out any second. The inhabitants of the surrounding villages prepared to leave their homes. The eruption had to be closed to avert a disaster.

In this situation the government of the German Democratic Republic asked the government of the Soviet Union on 29 July to help with experienced specialists since the German miners had no experience in extinguishing and closing gas eruptions. The request reached Moscow late in the evening. The gas administration of the USSR was instructed to select three specialists and send them to the German Democratic Republic. The next day Comrades Vassilyev, Gelfgat and Mamikonyanz arrived at Berlin-Schönefeld airport. They were immediately driven to the scene of the eruption.

Scarcely twenty hours after the alarm had become known in Moscow the Soviet helpers were at the bore hole.

The eruption raged deafeningly, and one could not hear oneself speak. "Give water! More water!" Vassilyev wrote on a scrap of paper.—The experienced friends gave their instructions. Strong water jets were directed at the miners, to soak them and protect them from fire in the work they now had to do. A lot of water was needed. The water container was five kilometres away. The firemen quickly laid two big hoses to the bore hole—ten pumps were needed to pump the water through them. Then a youth team laid a water conduit. Twenty-six fire hoses were directed at the workers. The protective planking was stripped off the tower so that air could circulate freely and no gas could gather.

After that the 20-ton pumps and the diesel motors were cleared away. In all some 800 tons of expensive equipment were moved to safety.

As a first measure the Soviet engineers had replaced all iron or steel tools with copper or coppered ones. Copper does not spark—and even the tiniest spark could have caused the gas to ignite. Under the supervision of the Soviet engineers special footbridges were erected at two sides of the foot of the tower. These were to enable the workers to quickly leave the danger zone should a fire break out. Twelve metres higher up, where Schiper and his team were sawing the pipes, it was even more dangerous. A footbridge would be of no use up there if a fire were to break out. Soviet engineer Yakov Gelfgat was also on this platform. He worked there with the tower-men. The miners of the German Democratic Republic saw their Soviet friends in the most dangerous places.

The GDR newspapers celebrated this friendship. One-and-a-half months had been planned for the work. After nine days the complicated metal maze had been disentangled, the pipes pulled out, and the implements and bore hole completely cleared up.

The eruption was to be closed on 10 August; the equipment was ready. But then it happened. In the night of 9 August the gas fountain was ignited by a flash of lightning. Within seven minutes the metal tower fell into the fire. Sixty-five pipes and steel structural work fell across the top of the bore hole. The miners hurried to the fire—a mass of flame about 40 metres high and 12 metres in diameter.

The most important thing was to clear away all metal. There was no chance of extinguishing the burning gas as long as glowing metal tubes lay alongside the bore hole. On their way to the white hot pipes the workers were protected by asbestos suits and special combinations. Comrade Mamikonyanz went forward under the cover of strong water jets. The ends of the pipes were laid bare and roped with steel wires. The miners were full of admiration for the courage of Comrade Mamikonyanz, a man who had struggled with fire for almost half a century and been called to eruptions six times in the last year alone. The miners had to work in a frightful heat and stood up to their knees in water and dirt; caterpillar tractors came to help them.

Only 25 pipes were drawn out of the fire in three days. These “boring trains” were extremely difficult to move, and it was decided to blast them apart. The population was informed about it. Although sixty charges were exploded, the desired effect was not obtained. The explosions were continued; but the pipes could only be salvaged slowly. Now, still more water was needed.

The Soviet engineers asked Moscow to send them ten self-propelled pressure extinguishers—the jet of water they project is far more powerful than that of an ordinary fire-hose. The pressure extinguishers were flown from the Soviet Union to Thuringia.

After a prolonged “wetting”, the general attack started. At last the bore hole was cleared of all metal, and the conflagration gradually reduced to a single jet of fire shooting skywards.

Reduced to these dimensions, the fire was, relatively speaking, easy to extinguish. For the first time, a chemical extinguisher developed by a young GDR research worker was used for such a fire. The experiment was successful; the fire was out within two minutes.

After 21 days of uninterrupted work and with the assistance of three Soviet specialists the danger had been overcome. On this day the miners hoisted the state flag of the German Democratic Republic and at its side the red flag, symbol of proletarian solidarity.

Forty-five GDR miners were honoured as activists. The departure of the Soviet specialists became a demonstration of German-Soviet friendship. Master-borer Klein spoke on behalf of all his colleagues: “All of us wish to thank the Soviet comrades. We

have taken them into our hearts because of their courage, personal example and brotherliness. Their instructions were always well thought out, and not one of our miners was injured."

On New Year's Eve 1959 the deeds of the Soviet and GDR miners were again at the focal point of a special occasion: The ambassador of the German Democratic Republic in Moscow had invited Soviet comrades Engineer Alexander Alexeyevich Vassilyev from the gas administration, Engineer Yakov Aronovich Gelfgat from the State Scientific Committee of the Council of Ministers of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, and Grosdan Mushezovich Mamikonyanz from the department for fire protection, the heroes of Langensalza, to the embassy to decorate them for their outstanding and selfless work at the Thuringian bore-hole. The government of the German Democratic Republic honoured them with the award of the "Banner of Labour".

Once again the fraternal friendship among the builders of a new world, the builders of socialism, had been demonstrated.

The fraternal cooperation and mutual assistance between the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic has grown and strengthened in the course of the years. It appears in many forms, and the results speak for its significance. From 1960 to 1963 alone some 33,000 exchanges of experience took place between skilled workers, technicians and scientists of the two socialist countries. From 1951 to 1961 the Commission for Technical-Scientific Cooperation made 1,539 decisions in favour of the USSR and 2,492 in favour of the GDR (these are chiefly documentations and construction data). It is clear that the extent and quality of this cooperation has not diminished but has become still greater and better in recent times.

The Soviet journalist and writer Konstantin Simonov—he became known especially for his books on the Second World War. The Living and the Dead and One Is Not Born a Soldier—has traced this cooperation. After a visit to the shipyard in Stralsund, a town on the Baltic coast of the GDR, he wrote:

Through the Will of German Communists

I look at the Bay of Murmansk which teems with vessels of the world's most up-to-date fishing fleet, and involuntarily I recall the war—the bombs which fell on this town, on the old quays. I recall the fascist operational documents and fascist newspapers which

were seized then by our reconnaissance service in which it was demanded that Murmansk be eliminated, and again I look at the bay in which lie, among the other ships, the modern und beautiful medium-sized trawlers which were constructed with much care for us by the working people in the German Democratic Republic, the shipbuilders of Stralsund. And I want to go from Murmansk to Stralsund, to the new Germany and talk with the new people there who built these ships.

And now I am in Stralsund. Here ships are built for the fishing fleet and most of them for us, for our fishing fleet in Murmansk, in the Baltic Sea, in the Black Sea and in the Far East. I went to Stralsund with German comrades to visit this shipyard of which they are so proud. On the way to this town I suddenly recalled one of my fleeting impressions from the first days in the German Democratic Republic.

I was accommodated in the Berolina Hotel which had been opened the previous day on Karl Marx Allee. Berolina is the old Latin name for Berlin and much could be written about this excellent hotel. My first fleeting recollection was, however, not so much of the hotel itself as of one of its lifts: as it carried me upward I looked at the little plate with the name of the works which manufactured the lift and read the word "Kirov" written in German. I saw it and thought: Excellent! We not only build fast lifts but supply them to our friends as well. But then I looked a little closer, and saw that I was mistaken. The inscription read as follows in full translation—"Nationally-Owned Kirov Works Leipzig".

I must say that this error did not grieve me. Naturally it would not have been bad if this lift had proved to be a Soviet one, but the connection of the words "Leipzig", "Kirov", "nationally-owned enterprise" and "German Democratic Republic"—is that not really grand, just when one considers the sense of all these words which were combined through the will of German communists.

But now to Stralsund. It is an old town which was founded even before the Hanseatic League, with steep-gabled houses reminding one of sails, with the remains of old fortress walls which have grown into one with the old buildings, with a moist sea-air enticing one to travel to distant countries. The Isle of Rügen can be seen to the north of the town, on the far side of the Strela Sound through which there extends a long causeway carrying a railway bridge.

Everything in this town smells of the sea, and a fresh sea wind blows over the shipyard although it is a fine sunny day.

The acquaintance with the shipyard begins with a square glass pavilion in which models of all ships which were ever built by the shipyard and are built today have been brought

together. One does not need to enter the pavilion to see all this because it is completely transparent. And it does not stand in a remote corner like any old museum but directly on the way to the main buildings of the shipyard. It stands there so that one simply cannot pass without noticing it. And an old worker who leaves the works to become an old age pensioner will pass there on his last work day, stop and look at this pavilion with pride at everything which he created with his hands and which has been collected in small size there. And a newcomer who has gone through the works gate for the first time will step up to this glass cube and see what had been built by the people before him, before he began to work. This is what I think of when we stand in the pavilion and view the models, and I am glad that this little museum stands right on the way of people to their work and reminds them of the beauty they create with the labour of their hands.

Hermann Rickmann, assistant of the technical director, and Edelgard Lüdtke, a shipbuilding engineer and deputy party secretary, give me a report on the history of the shipyard as we go from model to model.

There is a little wooden fishing launch—they were built here before 1945 by the private Kröger firm. Correctly speaking the words “Kröger Shipyard” were only a pretentious denotation: one slip, a factory hall, a hundred workers and such launches as products of the firm.

“The shipyard had to be built up out of nothing, as it were?” I ask.

“No, not out of nothing, but much worse: on a swamp . . . The old shipyard was literally a small island in the middle of a swamp. Anyone who has not seen these grounds before can imagine what was here only with difficulty. And also with the specialists one had to begin with nothing, so to say. There were six shipbuilding workers, and all the others had quite different vocations. They were farmers, road construction workers, shoemakers and barbers . . . What occupation was not represented here! Only in 1949 did a large group of shipbuilders who had formerly worked in other shipyards and then returned from prisoner-of-war camps in the Soviet Union arrive at the shipyard. But before then many specialists had already been trained here. Today 500 people attend the training centre of the shipyard, and some of them do not return here when leaving the centre but go to other shipyards—thus things develop, thus time passes . . .”

I am taken to the model of a trawler which I recognize at once for I had seen just such trawlers a few days before at the quays of Murmansk port. They lay there and were unloaded after returning from the Barents Sea.

It is no wonder that I saw so many of these ships at home, for their construction was begun in 1949, and 595 of them have been built.

And there is the model of still another, still more modern trawler. I have seen it, too, at home. Its length is not 32 metres, but 50. Its holds are equipped with refrigerators. The shipyard has built quite a number of these trawlers for us.

And there is the model of a mother-ship of the fishing fleet, the R-600 type, a large processing and refrigeration ship. These ships which were built in Stralsund also plough through the waves under our Soviet flag. I have seen them, too.

But I had not yet had an opportunity to see this new child of the shipyard, this exceedingly beautiful refrigeration trawler of the "Tropik" type. The first "Tropik" was launched at the end of 1961. It was tested, and then its construction in series began. Twenty-seven such ships have been built up to date. But the shipyard still has to complete a tremendous order for the Soviet Union. The shipyard has concluded a contract on the delivery of these first-class ships to us.

"In connection with this order we have work until 1970," Rickmann says full of satisfaction. "We know what we shall do for the next six years!"

Together with Rickmann and Ernst Parnizke, a young technologist who has joined us, we go through the halls. Rickmann belongs to the old staff of the shipyard; he has worked here for fifteen years already, after he had returned from a POW camp as a convinced anti-fascist. Ernst was still a boy when the war began and although he has some command of the Russian language—Ernst lived in the Soviet Union for about two years—he came to our country at a completely different time and for quite other reasons than Rickmann. He had graduated from an institute in his home country and came to us for his practical training. When he learned that I was born in Leningrad he began to recall this city in which he completed his practical training as an engineer.

Production has been extensively and consistently automated at the Stralsund shipyard. The huge steel plates that go to make up the various parts of a ship's hull are cut to size and shape on a gigantic machine. This machine has, if one may put it that way, two wings which accommodate the flame cutters. In its centre-piece is an optical control device. A negative—double match-box size—of a drawing showing the contours of the plate to be cut is placed in this device. The machine views this drawing with its eye and copies the lines with the cutters.

The eye of the machine views the negative, and the positive—to continue the photographic comparison—comes out from under the cutters—exactly cut steel plates of the ship according to the tiny drawing. Then they are bent, further transported, and the sections and parts of the future ship wander from department to department... And there we are already at the end of the process where the ships which have not yet been launched

stand on the slips whereas quite a number of already launched ships lie along the very long wall. They all bear numbers, one after the other: 38, 39, 40, 41—in this order they are brought here by the conveyer line of the shipyard out on to the water.

The slips on which the ships stand before launching are equipped with efficient hydraulic lifts. When the time has come to launch the ship the lift descends, and the ship floats. When the next "Tropik" returns for the guarantee repair after its first year at sea it goes into the chamber above the hydraulic lift, and this raises it on shore. One feels a bit sorry for the film cameramen, for up-to-date technology has eliminated the most beautiful moment of photography, when the ship glides down the ways ever more rapidly into the water. The colleagues from the German Democratic Republic report that these hydraulic lifts have been in operation since 1960. A few hydraulic lifts were ordered in West Germany, but the deliveries were delayed in the hope of holding up everything, but these plans were thwarted. A few months passed, and what had not been supplied by the capitalists was delivered by the socialist neighbour Czechoslovakia.

Supplies from several hundred enterprises of the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries arrive at the shipyard. Czechoslovakia produces the generators, supplies the steel sheeting, and the steel pipes are supplied by the USSR. In a word, here the results of the work of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance shows positive effects.

We board an already launched "Tropik". That part of the ship which lies above water is fitted out and coated with paint. The hammer and sickle that can already be seen in fresh colours on the funnel indicate that this ship will sail under the Soviet flag.

These trawlers were not given the name "Tropik" by chance, for they are designed chiefly for voyages in southern latitudes. The fish are heaved aboard the "Tropik" with the stern drag-net and conveyed directly to the hatches of the pre-cooling room together with the drag-net. Then the fish are sorted and laid on sheets. These sheets are placed on carts, the carts roll into the cooling chamber with a temperature of 42 degrees centigrade below zero in which 30 tons can be frozen in 24 hours. The fish is then packed and goes via conveyor belt to the store rooms.

These modern ships have not only the latest technological aids for the storing of products in tropical latitudes, here everything is provided to lighten the difficult work of the crew in these latitudes. Cramped fore-castle quarters do not exist on the "Tropiks". Here there are only cabins for one or two people, with hot and cold water and an air-conditioning plant which ensures a constant temperature of 18 degrees at outer temperatures of 40 to 45 degrees.

To me, the journalist, this ship appears as the peak of perfection. But the GDR shipbuilders say that they are already working on a new project of a ship of the same type. At present a "Tropik" has a crew of 76 men, but in the future it is to be reduced to 58 men, by 1970 even to 40 through a further mechanization of fish processing methods. After six years automation is to supplant almost one half of the crew.

The extent of a reportage does not allow a detailed report on the cordial talk which took place subsequently after the shipyard inspection in the works canteen. I only want to say that I felt at home there among the workers of the German Democratic Republic.

Airlines of Friendship

The air traffic enterprises of the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union are connected by close friendly relations. Today contracts exist between Interflug and 50 international airline companies. Aircraft bearing the insignia of the German Democratic Republic regularly fly to 20 cities in Europe, Africa and Asia, and connections exist with the world-wide airline network. The secret of these successes lies in the purposeful activity of the Interflug staff and their good cooperation with Aeroflot.

When preliminary works for the construction of a civil aviation began in the German Democratic Republic in 1955 it was Soviet experts who helped with advice and action in the technical and organizational projects and in the training of flight personnel. The Soviet Union supplied the first twin-engined medium-distance IL 14's, and Aeroflot sent a few of its most experienced air crews with millions of kilometres of flying experience to the GDR capital.

The cockpits of the IL 14 became training places of the first GDR crews to whom the Soviet instructors readily imparted their experience and know-how. Tested Aeroflot pilots sat behind the controls in GDR planes until German pilots, wireless operators and other crew members had gathered enough experience, for example, at the higher school of aviation in Ulyanovsk in the USSR and in practice. Thanks to eager efforts of "instructors" and "apprentices", commercial aviation of the German Democratic Republic grew out of its toddling clothes in a short time. GDR crews took over in 1957. Their Soviet colleagues returned to their homeland.

Aeroflot supplied help in the erection of Berlin-Schönefeld Central Airport especially in the installation of the technical services and in flight safety.

Airway service between the two capitals started on 7 October 1956 and since then has

increased by leaps and bounds from year to year. In 1957 only 10,600 passengers flew from the Spree to the Moskva in GDR planes; this number increased to 27,000 in 1964 and to more than 45,000 in 1966.

The constantly growing demand on this route which was caused not least by the intensification of the political, economic and scientific-technical relations between the two countries, required more seats and a denser succession of flights. Interflug and Aeroflot also closely cooperated here, so that in the summer of 1966, for example, it was possible to put on 21 flights a week between Berlin and Moscow with planes of the two companies.

The purchase of the Soviet IL 18 and the training of GDR crews at Soviet commercial aviation schools made possible the operation of this large plane by the GDR airline. Interflug transported a total of 213,000 passengers between the two capitals from October 1956 to October 1966.

The fraternal assistance and cooperation which was expressed in the state air traffic agreement extends from support in building up the GDR's agro-aviation service to the supplying of the necessary AN 2 "flying-tractors".

This cooperation also showed its efficacy in 1966 in the operation of the AN 24 by Interflug for medium distances and domestic flights. Their crews received the necessary theoretical and practical training at Soviet aviation schools.

The most up-to-date scientific knowledge and its quick application in industry decisively determine the speed of development of the national economies and, in the socialist countries the raising of the standard of living. The training of the young generation of scientists, joint research and the exchange of research results, therefore, play a great role in the cooperation between the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic—as in general between the socialist states. The author of the following contribution, Dieter Seeliger, is a young GDR scientist who received his training in the Soviet Union.

Student in Moscow

My closer acquaintance with the Soviet Union began in August 1957. Together with a few hundred secondary-school graduates from the German Democratic Republic I went to study in the large country, full of joyful expectation. We had prepared ourselves intensively for a year, had deepened our knowledge of the Russian language and acquainted

ourselves with the living habits and the culture of the Russian people by means of books, films and travel reports. But at the same time we had also acquired the necessary preliminary knowledge in the natural sciences and mathematics. Now we were to have the opportunity of completing our knowledge on the Soviet Union in the country itself.

I was the only German student at the physics faculty of the Lomonossov University in Moscow. The students' home was in the main building of the university on the Lenin Hills. At that time the city limits of Moscow were located there with gardens, fields and wooden houses dotted here and there. During the time of my studies a new part of the city with a few hundreds of thousands of inhabitants grew here around the university, one of a few of such parts of the city which came into existence in Moscow at that time.

I lived in a room on the tenth storey together with Valery, a Siberian. Valery had come still farther than I to Moscow to study, the city and the life at the university were as new to him as to me. Yet I felt from the first day how he tried in every way to help me to become familiar with the new surroundings. He did so without having been asked to, out of a feeling of responsibility and attentiveness towards the foreign guest. On study-free days we got acquainted with the city together, visited museums, exhibitions and other sights. Later we also made joint outings to the environs of Moscow on weekends. After a short time we were friends, and we remained together until the end of the course.

Often an international group gets together in the evening in the home with the obligatory Russian "chai" (tea). Students from all socialist countries were there, also Arabs, Africans, Indians and representatives of many Soviet nationalities. Each told of his home country, of the culture of his country, of personal experiences. Naturally there were often political discussions. An atmosphere of international friendship came into existence which became an essential part of the entire atmosphere at the university. I am still in contact with the friends I made there.

Study claimed our entire energies. It began with the two-and-a-half-year basic course in mathematics, experimental and theoretical physics. But social science and linguistic education took place with the same intensity. After the 44 to 46 hours of instruction per week, self-study took place in the evenings—which mostly extended until midnight. The initial linguistic difficulties were soon overcome, and the real problem of the course turned up, the mastering of the tremendous quantity of material presented. Sometimes it seemed impossible to acquire all the necessary knowledge. But when the examinations at the end of term were successfully passed self-reliance and joy in study grew.

That was chiefly the merit of the outstanding Soviet teachers who succeeded in arousing in us enthusiasm for our future vocation, for physics. In the first place there was Nobel

Prize Winner Professor Landau. His lectures on theoretical physics enjoyed the greatest popularity. Sometimes it was even difficult to find standing room in the large physics lecture hall. He explained the most complicated theoretical problems with such clearness and compelling logic that the listeners were seized by his statements and had to follow them. These hours gave me the certainty that I had chosen the right field of study, they gave me the spirit to master the high demands placed on us.

The lecture was not the only contact with the professors, for they were always ready for talks with the students after the lectures and during practical work. We made great use of this opportunity. The professors regularly visited the student home and spoke about their lives and interesting research work. They also inquired about our problems and needs. Thus we constantly had the personal and scientific model of our teachers before our eyes, which left a lasting impression on me.

Special instruction in the field of nuclear physics began in the sixth term, at first still in Moscow and from the ninth to the eleventh term in a branch of the university in Dubna where the instruction was closely linked with the research work of the United Institute for Nuclear Research. In this time I heard a large number of lectures on special questions of low and high energy nuclear physics, read by well-known scientists of the United Institute for Nuclear Research, among them professors Weksler, Pontecorvo, Davydov, Balashov, Nobel Prize Winner Professor Frank and many young associates. Since these scientists were active at a leading centre of nuclear physics research, their lectures reflected the latest developments in that field which were often not to be found in any textbook. In addition we students worked with the most up-to-date apparatus and electronic computers. I wrote my diploma thesis directly in a research group of the laboratory for neutron physics at the impulse reactor.

My course ended in January 1963. Study gave me, along with a broad basic physics instruction, a thorough special training up to the latest level of developments which enabled me after my return to the German Democratic Republic to take up work in nuclear physics research in a short space of time.

While in the Soviet Union there were events and occurrences along with study which made a lasting impression on me, thus, for example, the great military parade and demonstration of the working people of Moscow on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution which I experienced on the Red Square in Moscow. Almost at the same time, in October 1957, the Soviet Union opened the age of space flight with the start of the first artificial satellite. This event, as well as all following performances of Soviet space research, was welcomed in the entire country with

a real storm of enthusiasm. Enthusiasm reached its absolute high point with the space flight of Yuri Gagarin. After his arrival in Moscow there was a demonstration whose duration broke all schedules; it seemed as if the whole of Moscow was on its feet. There was singing and dancing in the streets. Joy and pride in the success of the country could be read in the faces of the people.

The talks with workers, farmers and intellectuals which I had during this period were very interesting. There is scarcely a Soviet citizen who is not interested in politics. The concern for the maintenance of peace is always in the first place. There is also a uniformity of attitude to the two German states. The first question which is always asked at such meetings is: "From which Germany do you come?" The reply: "From the German Democratic Republic" always thaws the initial reserve, and soon one was deep in friendly talk.

The Soviet Union deeply impressed me through the high tempo of its economic construction and the tremendous performances of science. But the deepest impressions were left by the Soviet people. With great vigour they work under often difficult conditions and with the readiness to make sacrifices for the economic development of their country. They are self-confident, full of patriotism and want friendship with other peoples.

Dr. Helmut Helfer and Gerhard Peter are scientific associates at an institute of the Technical University in Dresden. They had an opportunity to work at the United Institute for Nuclear Research in Dubna near Moscow for four years. In their report it becomes clear how important their cooperation with scientists from the Soviet Union and other socialist states is for themselves and for their country.

Four Years in the United Institute for Nuclear Research

In the little town of Dubna, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Soviet metropolis of Moscow, there is one of the world's largest international research centres, the United Institute for Nuclear Research. Here too, live scientists of the German Democratic Republic with their families and work side by side with Soviet people and citizens from other socialist states...

In the spring of 1956 government representatives of Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Poland, Rumania, the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam,

as well as representatives from China and Albania met in the conference hall of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. At this conference the decision was made to establish the United Institute for Nuclear Research in Dubna near Moscow.

The statute contains clear and distinct statements on the tasks of this first international research centre in the socialist world. It was stipulated that the entire activity of the institute should exclusively serve peaceful purposes and the welfare of mankind, and that relations with interested national and international organizations should be maintained for the continued development of nuclear physics and the opening of new possibilities for the peaceful use of atomic energy. The close friendly relations between Dubna and the West European nuclear research centre of CERN/Geneva and the Central Institute of Nuclear Research of the German Democratic Republic in Rossendorf near Dresden are only two examples of the successful realization of this project. The statute further states that the scientists of the member states carry through joint theoretical and experimental work in the field of nuclear physics. The United Institute grants appropriate assistance for the development of nuclear physics in the various countries and for the universal promotion of the scientific cadres through the exchange of experiences and results.

The Soviet government made available to the United Institute two large research complexes of the Academy of Sciences, the Institute for Nuclear Problems and the Electro-Physical Laboratory whose chief installations are a synchrocyclotron with 680 million electron-volts and a synchrophasotron with 10,000 million electron-volts of final energy. These huge particle accelerators were among the biggest in the world at that time. The scientists of the member countries had very favourable starting conditions because of the generous transfer of these institutes. It spared them time and money consuming investments and organizational difficulties which otherwise would certainly have meant several years loss of time.

We very soon learned to value this advantage when in 1958-59 we came to Dubna as young university graduates and began our work there. The teamwork and the zest for discussion with which all problems were treated were new for us. We sat together till late at night over especially difficult problems. It often happened that we returned to the institute in the night to get a reply to a question at issue through a little experiment. This style of work and the atmosphere were so good that we prolonged our contracts which at first had been concluded for one-and-a-half to two years. We remained in Dubna for four years.

Since 1956 many experienced and also young physicists from all socialist states have gone to Dubna and worked or still work today in the United Institute. The teams are,

as a rule international; at first, the Soviet colleagues were superior in experience to the foreign associates. But this situation changed in the course of years so that today often internationally renowned scientists from the socialist countries are active as team or department heads.

The German Democratic Republic is represented in Dubna by the members of the scientific council of the Institute, Professor Pose, Professor Lanius and Professor Alexander. Other distinguished scientists and talented young physicists from the academy and university institutes in Berlin, Dresden, Jena and Leipzig and technicians, engineers and scientists from the nationally-owned industry—for example, from the world-famous Carl Zeiss Works in Jena—help with their work in Dubna to increase the reputation of the United Institute and the German Democratic Republic.

The research city which is known throughout the world was really conjured up out of the ground with the founding of the United Institute. Its appearance changes from year to year. Anyone who visits the town today—it is located between the Volga and Dubna rivers on the far side from Moscow of the Moskva-Volga Canal—has a friendly sight of clean streets and squares, cultivated parks and sports grounds, newly built houses and community centres. This “town of science” which was built around the large laboratories has some 15,000 inhabitants; it is beautiful with its many parks, and has but little traffic. The institutes can be reached on foot in less than 15 minutes from the houses.

The romantic Russian wooden houses of the former little peasant village of Dubna have long since been replaced by modern residential blocks. Nevertheless, the closer surroundings of Dubna with their dense forests, with rivers and hills have lost nothing of their charm for hikers. The following characterizes the quick development of Dubna and surroundings: only ten years ago there are said to have been wolves in an area some twenty kilometres from Dubna—this is confirmed on a hunters’ and anglers’ map published in 1957.

For six years it has also been possible to reach Dubna in the comfortable cars of a diesel-electric railway from Moscow via Dimitrov in two-and-a-half hours. The route leads through a varied landscape of mixed forests, for the greater part parallel to the motorway and the Moskva-Volga Canal which flows into the “Moscow Sea” (Volga reservoir) near Dubna. In the summer one can often see from the windows of the train large passenger boats and oil tankers which pass the Dubna beach on the Volga on their way to Astrakhan.

How do the foreign inhabitants of this town shape their leisure time, their life with one another and with Soviet citizens? It is difficult to write something on matter-of-fact

jesting in a serene holiday atmosphere until late at night. Time passed swiftly—not only on these evenings, but generally in Dubna.

Personal relations with all of our Dubna acquaintances, with Soviet and other associates have remained lasting; correspondence and mutual visits of those colleagues who worked together in one team prove this. The many scientific successes which resulted from this teamwork underline the importance of the Institute for the entire field of nuclear physics. Moreover, an international feeling of solidarity developed through Dubna which has had a continuous fruitful effect on the work of nuclear physicists from many countries.

Whether at conferences in Warsaw, Budapest or at symposia in Moscow, Cracow or Prague—everywhere friends from Dubna are met again. The personal contact broadens into relations between entire institutes, and not seldom is long-term cooperation in mutually coordinated fields a visible sign of the close contact stimulated through working together at Dubna.

While politicians, journalists and jurists in West Germany quarrel about whether the term "GDR" may be used, the German Democratic Republic has become one of the world's ten strongest industrial powers. It has its embassies, consulates and trade representations in a growing number of countries in all continents. The world's most important fairs publicize its products, and firms of world renown come to the traditional international trade fairs in Leipzig, where 10,447 exhibitors from 75 countries and visitors from 94 countries were counted at the 800th anniversary fair in 1965.

More than a thousand agreements have been concluded with states all over the world; more than 150 ships sail the seas under the GDR colours; the sportsmen and athletes of this country win a growing number of world championship titles from year to year; GDR theatres on tour in Britain, the Soviet Union, Austria, Italy and France are named together with the best in the world.

All this has come about as a result of the great achievements made by the workers, farmers and intelligentsia of the German Democratic Republic in close friendly cooperation on a basis of equality with the working people of the USSR.

A new stage in the friendly relations between the two peoples began with the signing of the Treaty on Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Cooperation between the GDR and the USSR on 12 June 1964. This treaty secures the GDR a peaceful future at the side of this powerful state and guarantees that it will be able to bring all its projects to fruition undisturbed. The coordination of the national economic plans, the bringing together and

coordination of the national economies of the two countries ensures a maximum of productivity.

The steadily growing number of mutual deliveries prove how useful this community is for both sides. Almost one half of the GDR's foreign trade is transacted with the Soviet Union, and the GDR is the biggest foreign trade partner of the Soviet Union. The largest trade agreement ever signed between two countries, covering goods exchange to the value of more than 60,000 million unit marks, has been concluded by the German Democratic Republic and the USSR.

On the basis of the friendship treaty an increasing number of agreements are being concluded between branches of industry and between scientific and cultural institutions of the two countries. An ever closer degree of cooperation in all fields is thus ensured.

This comprehensive and close cooperation of the two allied countries rests on the same interests and aims of their peoples, on the socialist social system of the two states. Today there are relations between the USSR and the GDR which were up to now unknown in the history of German-Soviet cooperation.

It is only natural that the fraternal solidarity of the two states also produces human relationships which have proven their value in many situations. Horst Holzschuh of the GDR was present when Soviet soldiers risked their lives helping to save German people from disaster.

Heroes of the Niemeck Embankment

Dark clouds covered the sky. A cold, hard rain deluged the countryside in that summer of 1954.

The people of the Bitterfeld district to the north of Leipzig heard with alarm the news of the rise of the Mulde river. The dirty, yellow swirling flood waters surged against the high seven-kilometre-long embankment at Niemeck, built to protect the low-lying land behind it and especially the Bitterfeld industrial centre with its large chemical works and lignite mines.

Only twelve months previously the Niemeck embankment had been raised and straightened. Although it still stood, the old dam with its curves and projections had always been in constant danger of being washed away by the eddying currents. The new embankment had not yet been reinforced and the question arose as to whether it could hold back the threatening floods.

During the night sirens howled above the noise of the storm: Flood alarm! A mighty flood wave was rushing from the source of the Mulde towards the Elbe, tearing down everything in its path.

Those miners in Niemegek who were off shift hurried to the embankment. Nothing but the ghastly roar and gurgle of the raging flood could be heard in the darkness. When the grey dawn broke the whole of the wide Mulde valley was inundated by the mass of water. Uprooted trees, shrubs and even furniture hurtled downstream in the frantic torrent. The danger grew from hour to hour, and the rain poured down pitilessly.

Soon the first waves splashed across the top of the embankment. The small band of men trying to save it were at the end of their strength.

Then came the roar of the motors of heavy lorries—help was on the way; young soldiers of the armed units of the People's Police from Halle. Sandbags, stones and wooden beams were fetched to strengthen the weakened spots.

The rain poured without a break and the helpers were already soaked to the skin. The approaches to the embankment had been churned into an almost bottomless morass, making it more and more difficult to transport the materials. The pressure of the water on the dam increased.

Should the top of the old embankment give way, the surging mass of water would sweep away the new structure, situated about 100 metres behind it, and tear on to bring devastation to Bitterfeld. The lignite mines—opencast workings—would be flooded, and that would mean closing them down for a long time—and lignite is the raw material for the chemical industry.

The superhuman exertion of the last days had almost completely exhausted the men fighting to save the embankment. But they could expect no relief—every hand was needed, everywhere, to ward off the catastrophe.

The third night fell. The call for sandbags or other material to reinforce the embankment became more urgent. Three lorries and a caterpillar tractor that tried to make their way through the knee-deep quagmire got stuck after a few metres and had to be winched back. Was the dam lost?

Next came frightening news: The water had soaked through the base of the embankment which had begun to lift over a length of forty metres. What could be done? Was the fight of the men to have been in vain? There were no sandbags or stones left. The miners and the men of the People's Police flung themselves down over the endangered area without thought of what would happen to them if the embankment burst. In vain—the danger area widened. All seemed to be lost.

Vehicle headlights cut the darkness of the rainy night. Their motors howling, the vehicles forced their way forwards. The first two reached the embankment, the third bogged down, those following got through. Men jumped from the tail-boards, sandbags were hurriedly thrown down. Enough to save the dam?

Who are the new helpers? Soviet soldiers. The dam quickly swallowed up the materials they had brought—then it burst. The raging waters tore through the gap and thundered with elemental force against the new embankment.

The greatest danger threatened, for here, too, the dam base started to lift. Not a single sandbag was left. Again the men laid themselves across the danger spot. Soviet soldiers, miners and People's Police lay side by side on the swaying dam protecting the land and the work-places of tens of thousands of people.

The drivers of the Soviet lorries scrambled behind their steering wheels, the motors roared into life and the lorries disappeared into the night. Would they make it?

More than an hour had passed. Again the roar of heavy motors. Caterpillar tractor drivers, spurred on by the selfless example of the Soviet drivers, dared the ascent and brought sandbags and other materials.

When dawn broke the Niemeck embankment was still defying the raging assault of the floods. But the danger was not past.

During the days that followed, the Soviet and German people performed many a heroic deed. Under conditions that grew steadily worse, pioneers of the Soviet army reinforced the swaying embankment with thick boards and heavy beams. Often up to their chests in the chilling water, People's Police filled in those sections of the dam facing that the flood had washed away.

As the darkness of the next night sank over the tired men came the news: "It is not expected that the river will rise any further."

Niemeck embankment had been saved.

Walter Kaufmann writes about another deed of friendship that will not be forgotten:

Twice Born

The metallic voice of the loudspeaker: "All aboard the express to Moscow via Warsaw . . .!" cut the talk. Rudolf kisses Gertrud once more, takes his little boy in his arms, embraces him and looks into the big dark eyes . . .

The train rolls out of the station.

A last wave. Slowly Rudolf's arm sinks. The ocean of houses in the sunshine has swallowed the train.

Gertrud and her son Manfred have a compartment of their own. The seats are upholstered, one can travel in comfort.

Harvested grain fields and dark coniferous forests fly past the windows. The region resembles that at home in Thuringia, Gertrud muses. The low monotonous rattle of the train leads her thoughts back nine years.

Manfred was born on 25 February 1945, a healthy and strong baby. Rudolf, who was still at the front at that time, was very proud of him. Two days later, on 27 February, it happened. The sirens howled. Air-raid warning! Bombs were already falling in the neighbourhood. Gertrud had jumped out of bed with trembling knees, seized her three children and hurried to the cellar with them.

"When we die I want to be with my children!" she had shouted at the maternity nurse who bitterly reproached her: "You are risking your health!"

Gertrud had in fact caught a nasty cold in the moist cellar. The infant had probably imbibed some germ with his mother's milk, for after eight weeks his finger tips, lips and ears turned blue. These were the symptoms of a serious illness that grew worse and worse, as it turned out later.

When Manfred's contemporaries had long since started to school, played soccer and sported about outside, the little boy could barely move from one chair to the other. After two, three steps he fell headlong, face downwards and remained lying. He saw the street and the happily playing children only from a small hand-cart which his father had constructed for him after work.

Years passed, and Manfred's health grew visibly worse. It became increasingly certain that the boy's days were numbered.

A children's specialist of his home town had treated him—without success; he had been to the Jena university clinic and finally to the Charité in Berlin. But nowhere could he be helped.

One evening Rudolf told his wife: "We should go to a Soviet doctor."

"But you don't know one."

The thought gave Rudolf no peace. On one of the last days in August 1954 he plucked up courage and went to the Soviet military hospital.

The doctor listened to him quietly.

"We must examine the child," he said.

On the next day a Soviet doctor came to their house. She examined Manfred carefully for a long time, then she said with an earnest face:

"We shall see what can be done. Come to us in a few days."

Father and mother alternated between hope and doubt until Rudolf was informed after a few days:

"Your son can be helped. But he must go to Moscow into a clinic. We have arranged everything. Please settle the necessary passport formalities for your wife and the child with the German authorities at once." Rudolf could hardly believe his ears.

"But that's going to cost a lot of money. Too much for a worker like me."

"Let that be our worry," the doctor replied calmly but firmly.

Then mother and child were sitting in the train travelling to Moscow.

To be sure, Gertrud was glad at this prospect for her boy, but she could not forget the alarmed talk of a few neighbours: "You are going to the Russians? Who knows what they will do with the child!"

After two days they were welcomed at the station in Moscow by a representative of the embassy of our Republic and an interpreter.

Five minutes later the mother had rouble notes in her hand for the first time, and a car took them through the heavy traffic to the Savoy Hotel, a most comfortable place in which every room has a bath.

The next morning Gertrud and Manfred went to the hospital in Krasnovski Street. Again a cordial welcome! To her surprise she was allowed to live in the clinic. The news that a German woman with her seriously ill child had arrived spread like wildfire in all rooms. And now something happened which disconcerted Gertrud: whether doctor, nurse or patient—all wanted to see Manfred and herself. And although Gertrud did not understand their words she read the deep sympathy in their faces.

Days and weeks passed. Now and then the interpreter who meanwhile had become more than just a friend invited Gertrud on sightseeing tours. She was to see something of all the great and beautiful in the old and yet so young city.

Then came 26 October. In the late afternoon Professor Bakulev asked Gertrud to come to him. He told her that the examinations were concluded. Manfred had a serious cardiac valve disease. His body had meanwhile become so resistant that the complicated operation could be undertaken.

"We ask you to give your consent. It will be a difficult operation, but we are confident that we can help the boy."

When the door of the operating-theatre closed behind the doctors and their patient

the next morning the hands of the clock pointed to ten. Gertrud walked up and down the long corridor, up and down . . . Her heart ached. Will it be all right? Finally, after four hours, Manfred was taken into his room, completely covered, so that his mother could not see him. He was alive. But would he wake up again?

The clear autumn night fell over Moscow. At about six o'clock Gertrud heard Manfred's voice from the next room. A few minutes later she was allowed to see him. Manfred recognized her. A nurse bent down over him and wet his lips with tea. But he only murmured: I'm thirsty."

In the evening hours of that 27 October 1954 Radio Moscow announced: "The thirtieth heart operation by Soviet scientists took place successfully this morning in a Moscow hospital." The world listened attentively. Science celebrated a new great triumph.

At the same time doctors and nurses sat at Manfred's bed. They watched every breath and every movement of the boy with great attention. The next day he was better. He could think clearly again.

After a few days Manfred wanted to get up. The nurse immediately hurried to the professor. A few minutes later he sat by the side of his brave little patient.

"Well, let's try it then!"

Everyone followed every movement of the boy with close attention. Manfred set his feet on the ground and made the first step, the second, the third. "I can walk." The professor took him in his arms. His mother sobbed.

Shortly before Christmas 1954 Manfred had recovered so well that Gertrud could return home, her mind at peace.

The boy was to stay in Moscow until March. His tenth birthday was a holiday for the entire hospital. Doctors, nurses and patients, all congratulated their little friend. Hundreds of presents were piled up. Professor Bakulev, too, insisted upon congratulating Manfred personally and presenting him with the wrist-watch which the boy had always wanted.

A young Soviet doctor then brought the child that had been born a second time in Moscow back to Berlin.

Citizens of the GDR have repeatedly shown that the friendship with Soviet people is something that is deep in their hearts. The Soviet journalist Stanislav Gribanov describes an event in which friendship, courage and the readiness to make sacrifices remained victorious.

Decision on the Open Field

The plane sank deeper and deeper. It seemed as if its wings would sink in the tree-tops in the next second, as if it were inevitable that the heavy plane would crash into the houses of the village. Horst König stiffened. How often had he watched as the birds of steel furrowed the sky, had grown accustomed to the roar of their turbines. But what was happening now, this mysterious, alarming tranquillity of the plane falling to the earth forced him to listen closely. So much was clear: it had a serious defect. The flight could not be continued. Horst König, member of the staff of the agricultural research institute, rushed through the fields in the direction of the village. He realized that the disaster could not be prevented. It would take place before his eyes, and there was nothing which could avert the terrible end. The consciousness of weakness in view of the inevitable caused his heart to palpitate.

Suddenly the plane heeled over on its side, turned away sharply from the village, cut speed even more, but continued trimming laterally. Some invisible hand, an infinitely tenacious will tried steadfastly and persistently to avert the disaster. But the plane was falling. Horst König could not see it any longer. He worked the pedals of his bicycle with all his might and rushed to the neighbouring Marzahn cooperative farm. There, no one knew anything. No one divined that a few minutes ago a Soviet airman—Captain Semyonov—had accomplished a heroic deed in the sky above them.

The automatic systems worked exactly. The turbines behind the pilot howled. The plane flew according to order. But suddenly the power unit stopped. The heart of the machine no longer beat. It rushed downward impetuously. The command "Catapult!" came from the ground station. The pilot hesitated. As if he did not see the danger, as if he did not feel fear, he started the auxiliary turbine to gain altitude—instead of pressing the small rescue lever.

Below the plane a tractor furrowed the land which was wet from the spring rain, and there spread a meadow covered with camomile blossoms. Captain Semyonov did not see anything of this, his glance was concentrated on the dancing indicators. One of them, which indicated the number of revolutions of the power unit, swung to the right. But the plane continued to lose altitude. "Catapult!" the ground station again ordered. Captain Semyonov had enough time to leave the plane with the parachute. But the experienced airman grasped the situation with one glance. He clearly saw the trajectory of the falling machine. Then he replied briefly to the ground station: "I shall land!" These were the last words recorded on the tape of the ground station.

Ready for the forced landing. Captain Semyonov switched off the electrical units, secured the plane against the danger of exploding, and when the first roofs already lay beneath his wings, the pilot took a daring and determined step: He turned the rushing plane, which could scarcely be steered any longer, away from every obstacle directly to the earth.

Erich Drengner, chairman of the "Lenin" cooperative farm in Marzahn had scarcely heard of what had happened from Horst König when he mounted his motorcycle and rushed to the place of the forced landing. Bored into the field, the plane was wrapped in fire and clouds of smoke. Erich felt a dull pain when he saw this black cloud. The hot breath of death blew at him. On these two hundred metres which separated him from the burning plane he recalled how as a 19-year-old boy he had also run into the fire in 1941, at that time towards the unknown, the frightful. They had forced him to take a rifle, put on a steel helmet and mount a railway car which carried him away into the most terrible of all wars.

A distance of two hundred metres. This is not too little to meditate on many things. And now Erich Drengner, the former soldier of the Hitler Wehrmacht, is to stand his crucial test. Alone with himself and his conscience. He did not need to run across this field. He could go back. And when they heard about it they would not reproach him with having been a coward because now, in this minute already, an explosion could take place.

How long a way two hundred metres can be. The step becomes slower, ever shorter. Then with great difficulty Drengner mounted the wing surrounded by blazing flames. Through the dense caustic smoke, he saw the pilot sitting in the cockpit. The glass cupola at the steel body was only open a slit. Jammed! And round about nothing but the waving and rustling of the green ocean of wheat. Suddenly he saw a large boulder not far off. A jump from the wing. His feet sank in the soil, his shoulders were bent. But Drengner did not give up. He ran through the fire a second time. The heavy stone jammed in the slit after the blow. Erich Drengner made an effort to kick it out, hit it with his fists, and the airman helped from inside. The wedge worked! Another blow—and the cockpit roof could be moved.

Semyonov creeps out. "Run, comrade! Quick! Explosion!" The pilot made himself understood with signs. Suddenly Drengner collapsed by the plane. He had done everything possible. His strength was exhausted. He breathed heavily, singed by the fire. A heart ailment made itself felt. The airman returned to the short, thickset man, lifted his rescuer, and supporting one another they left the dangerous spot. A motorist, Helmuth

Eger, took the injured airman to the military hospital. Erich Drengner received first aid on the way to the hospital. And a helicopter arrived at the scene of the forced landing. Only twelve minutes had passed since the failure of the aircraft power unit . . .

Captain Semyonov's recovery makes good progress. The pilot will again return to his unit. And the cooperative chairman will go out on the field with the first rays of the sun as before. The Soviet command staff proposed him for a distinction for the courage he showed while rescuing the airman.

In recent years there have been many heart-touching reunions in Berlin and Moscow, in Leipzig and Leningrad, in Dresden and Kiev. People whose friendship defied persecution and terror in the darkness of fascist Germany found one another again often only through a roundabout way or by chance. The Berlin journalist Emil Peter wrote about such a meeting, about a friendship whose calm heroism belongs to the best traditions of German-Soviet relations. It is especially the deeds of such people out of which the present firm and indestructible friendship between the peoples of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic has grown.

Reunion

On 5 September 1966 the Soviet citizen Sina Mirishnikova (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) arrived at Ostbahnhof in Berlin on the way to visit Elli Kühn, a German housewife who lived in Jonsdorf in Saxony. At the same time she also wanted to get acquainted with the German Democratic Republic. Who is Sina?

27 June 1942. Tanks of the nazi Wehrmacht clattered through the little village of Ivanovka near Kursk, killing and destroying. Those inhabitants who had remained in the village hid themselves in terror. The men clenched their fists in powerless wrath, the children clung to their mothers' skirts in fear.

The next day the SS drove all the inhabitants to the village square. "The Germans have come to introduce a new order here," one of them shouted across the square. The Soviet people stood as silent as a wall, their faces the colour of wax. A movement went through the crowd. The SS started to sort out the young people, driving them like cattle—desperate cries echoed across the square; tears, blows with rifle butts—the new order. Among the young people herded together was Sina Mirishnikova, just nineteen years old. They were loaded into goods vans and transported away as "eastern labourers".

Sina and the other young Soviet women were put to work in an armaments factory at Gross-Schönau near Zittau as cheap labour to manufacture shells.

Sina had not been in the works very long before she learned to differentiate between the two types of people living in the country which had invaded her homeland. There were such tyrants as Paul Strohbach, a short lean man who was sullen, underhanded and short-tempered. He always sneaked around the forced labourers and did not let them out of his sight for a moment. He tormented and beat them whenever he could, and Sina was an especial object of his fury. If he found anything which he thought to be against the nazi system Strohbach had no hesitation in denouncing his German colleagues.

Elli Kühn and Helene Kästner were among the other Germans with whom Sina got acquainted. She worked together with them. The Germans had been prohibited from making contacts with the foreign labourers. But when Sina looked over to the two women she saw eyes that smiled encouragingly at her. Soon something like a silent understanding grew up between the three women.

The rations of the foreign labourers were scanty: one litre of soup and three hundred grams of bread a day. One day an older Czech worker slipped Sina a small parcel. "Bread and potatoes," he whispered in Russian, "from that woman over there," and he furtively pointed to Elli Kühn. "But watch out, she'll be punished if it becomes known."

From that day on Elli Kühn regularly brought bread and potatoes. She gave it to the Soviet women when she thought herself unobserved. But sometimes she was, and she received several warnings. But soon she brought more than just food. Her heart broke at the sight of the way the Soviet women were clothed. Secretly she brought shoes, a blouse, or a dress. Helene Kästner did the same.

When the Soviet women were not at work the two German women managed to take Sina to their homes. There she sat at the radio, her ear pressed to the loudspeaker. Radio Moscow reported that the Red Army was approaching the German frontier.

Helene Kästner was denounced to the Gestapo in Zittau. No one in the enterprise expected to see her again. But she returned—"warned for the last time".

Towards the end of April 1945 Sina had a mishap: she damaged the machine on which she was working because she did not know how to operate it. Strohbach and other nazis in the factory were on the spot at once—they accused Sina of sabotage. A telephone call was made to Gestapo headquarters in Zittau . . .

Sina wept in her desperation. "Flee!" many well-meaning people told her. "Flee, or you will be lost." Soviet troops were already at the Neisse river but it could take several days before they reached Zittau. Sina flees into the night.

Helene Kästner heard a faint knock at the front door. She opened the door a crack, and saw the Soviet girl standing outside. She pulled her in quickly. "Sina, my God . . ." She recalled with horror her own questioning in Zittau—and a terrible fear rose within her.

Helene Kästner regained her composure. She hurried to the wardrobe and found clothes for Sina. Before the day had broken she had brought Sina to Elli Kühn who lived at the edge of the forest on the outskirts of the village. Here the young girl found a second refuge.

Retreating German soldiers flooded the village, and military and civil police constantly searched for deserters. Sina did not want to endanger her German friends any more. After two days she fled into the forest where she soon met Soviet soldiers. The two German women had saved her life.

A Soviet Army newspaper published the story of Sina's rescue as a fine example of German-Soviet friendship. And from that moment on Soviet civilian and military authorities made every effort to trace the whereabouts of Elli Kühn.

One evening a Soviet major appeared at the police headquarters in Zittau which had discovered that Elli Kühn was living in Jonsdorf. The car stopped in front of a little house there, the windows were still lit.

"Frau Kühn," the interpreter said, "we have come on behalf of a Soviet woman whose life you saved during the war." Even before the interpreter had spoken the name, Elli Kühn clutched both hands to her breast and cried out: "Sina Mirishnikova!"

The Soviet major read Sina's letter out loud; she was now the mother of two children. Elli Kühn just cried and cried, and kept on repeating: "Yes, that's the way it was."

The express from Moscow to Donezk thundered southward at full speed. The passengers soon discovered the German woman in their midst. Elli Kühn draws the Soviet Army newspaper out of her luggage and points to an article. The Soviet people take it and read it; it passes from hand to hand. Everyone wants to shake Elli Kühn's hand; and complete strangers arrange a demonstration of Soviet-German friendship in the train on this 29 October 1965.

A few hours later another demonstration manifests itself at the station of Volokonovka which was crowded with people. Two women who have not seen each other for more than twenty years embrace; too happy for words and weeping tears of joy.

And now Sina is returning Elli Kühn's visit. She knows that in this part of Germany

oppression, subjugation and exploitation have been overcome once and for all. She saw new houses, new shops, visited new factories and got together with the people. She realized that the people of the GDR and the people of the Soviet Union are friends that can rely on one another, and that this friendship serves the prosperity of our peoples and peace.

Expressing the thoughts and feelings of the GDR population, Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl, who died in 1964, said in a speech delivered in the Great Kremlin Palace in Moscow in June 1959: "We have full confidence in the strength of the socialist camp and the forces of peace in the world. 1959 is not 1939. The forces of peace will, in resolute cooperation, be able to prevent a third world war.

"We know that the Soviet Union occupies an outstanding position in this struggle for peace, and that its power and strength restrain imperialists throughout the world. A good and peaceful life is possible at the side of the peace-loving socialist Soviet Union. Friendship with the Soviet Union is, for this reason, a part of the foundation of our country's policy.

"German-Soviet friendship has become a matter close to the hearts of all working people in the German Democratic Republic. We shall guard it as the apple of our eye. We shall protect and defend it. Today, and in all time to come!"

The Eighth Congress of the German-Soviet Friendship Society in June 1966 was a renewed impressive manifestation of the vital force of those words. Professor Johannes Dieckmann, President of the Society, People's Chamber Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Council of State of the GDR, in his address to the delegates of this great organization of friends of the Soviet Union in the GDR outlined a picture of the latest developments in the relations between the two countries.

Under the Banner of Friendship with the Soviet Union

The experiences of history teach all Germans that friendship with the Soviet Union is vital and essential for the German nation and thus indispensable. The recognition of this fact and its constant reaffirmation do not involve adherence to any specific political world outlook. However different the political views on the various problems may be, our people have experiences in common, in many cases collected under painful circumstances.

Twice in this century the German people have been confronted, at the end of devastating imperialist wars, with the alternative—either together with the Soviet Union for peace, freedom and progress, or against the Soviet Union into new national catastrophe. The answer to this question has also determined the attitude towards our own nation since the Great October Socialist Revolution gave birth to the first peace power in 1917.

We in the German Democratic Republic have given a clear answer to this vital question of the destiny of our people. This is eloquently testified to by the entire policy of our state.

The successful development and work of our organization, the German-Soviet Friendship Society, with its 3,500,000 members gives clear evidence of the fact that a fundamentally new chapter has begun in the history of relations between the peoples of our country and of the Soviet Union. The citizens of our state have drawn the correct conclusions from history. We took the hand of friendship extended to us by the Soviet Union and we shall never cast it aside.

The new start in our life after 1945, following the victory of the Soviet Army against the main forces of Hitler fascism at the cost of the greatest sacrifices, would have been inconceivable if there had not been that other Germany during all those bleak years, those anti-fascists who everywhere fulfilled their national and revolutionary obligations. We are gratefully moved at the thought that from the start of the battle on the banks of the Volga there were some Germans on the right side, constantly striving to save as many German soldiers as possible for the construction of a new, peace-loving and democratic Germany.

Among those anti-fascists there was also the man whom we named, as the most worthy of all, as the head of our peaceful German state—our highly esteemed friend Walter Ulbricht. We consider him to be the great example of inviolable friendship with the country and people which were the first to muster the courage and foresight to open the doors to genuine freedom and humanity, and under whose strong protection more and more peoples are taking to the road of social progress.

The great process of transformation in the attitude of our people towards the Soviet Union that took place and which is continuing to develop, is a result of the systematic political leadership of the people and the wise policy of alliance conducted by the united working class. Our German-Soviet Friendship Society played an important part in this great process of transformation.

German-Soviet friendship has immensely enriched us. Its most important fruits have been years of peaceful, secure, creative work. It has brought us economic, scientific and

cultural success to an extent such as we would never have been able to attain alone. It has allowed us to ensure the growing prosperity of our people. It has brought us the confidence and respect of the peace-loving peoples. The good name of the German nation had not only been besmirched by German imperialism, it had been destroyed throughout the world. It is our pride and honour that we have been able to restore this name in the German Democratic Republic under the symbol of German-Soviet friendship.

We friends of the Soviet Union are gravely alarmed at the trend of developments in West Germany. We recognize quite clearly that—as said by Leonid Brezhnev in his report to the 23rd Congress of the CPSU—West German imperialism is today the main ally of the USA in Europe in the drive to increase international tension, West Germany is the second world centre of the danger of war after Vietnam and the principal trouble-maker in Europe. This is a new situation, and the whole German people must become aware of its significance. It is extremely important in this connection that the West German population should recognize the role of anti-communism and revanchism as a means of preparing people for a military adventure.

The assertion of West German politicians that it is senseless to negotiate with the GDR because the key to reunification lies in Moscow has, on several occasions, been refuted by the Soviet Union as being contrary to facts.

The Soviet Union has irrevocably established that according to the principles of democratic international law no one but the German people, the two German states, are competent to conduct negotiations on rapprochement and understanding. It decisively rejects Bonn's claim to speak for the whole of Germany, emphasizing that the people of the GDR made use of the right of all peoples to self-determination when they set up their own state and social structure.

Today it is evident in the spheres of political, social and cultural life that the GDR is ahead of West Germany by a whole era, a fact which, for some time now, has been recognized by the progressive forces of the trade unions, democratically-minded scientists, students and intellectuals in the Federal Republic. We are now concentrating all our energies—and one may say successfully—on the task of mastering the scientific and technological revolution. In our situation close cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries is a major prerequisite for this.

The 12th session of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany stated in this connection: "The most advanced experiences in the world must be studied with a view to attaining and determining international standards in all key branches of science, technology and production. That means that today, and even more so in the

future, we must look towards the state which is the pioneer of human progress—the Soviet Union.”

That is in accord with the conclusions drawn by many workers, technicians and scientists of our Republic during the past years, as a result of their preoccupation with Soviet science and technology and of personal experiences in the Soviet Union.

The friendship journey by our party and government delegation last year, which showed us new aspects of scientific and cultural progress, above all in the Armenian and Aserbaidshanian SSR, and in particular the 23rd Congress of the CPSU conveyed a clear idea of the achievements of Soviet science and technology.

The 23rd Congress impressively reflected the vast achievements accomplished by the Soviet people since the triumph of the Great October Socialist Revolution under the leadership of its Leninist party, often at the cost of immense sacrifices and hardship and harassed by powerful imperialist adversaries.

The CPSU consistently continued along the political line established by the 20th, 21st and 22nd Congresses, on the basis of a precise scientific analysis. The 23rd Congress outlined a clear, realistic picture of the development of Soviet society in every sphere up to the year 1970, in the spirit of Lenin.

We are particularly glad to note that the 23rd Congress was able to decide to raise more rapidly the material prosperity of the Soviet people; no people has more deserved this increase in living standards than the Soviet people who, for years, made the utmost material sacrifices for the sake of the fraternal socialist peoples.

The outstanding successes of Soviet science in the field of space research have long since met with great recognition throughout the whole world. The Soviet Union has absolute priority in all important phases of conquering cosmic space. These successes would be inconceivable without first-class achievements in numerous fields of science, such as physics and mathematics, without the high standard of production in the leading branches of the national economy such as electrical engineering, electronics, engineering and metallurgy, and without the creative teamwork of many thousands of workers, technicians, engineers and scientists. We congratulate Soviet citizens on those magnificent achievements and wholeheartedly wish them further success.

The Soviet Union, which is the first country in the world to set up the material and technical basis of communism is, in our era, the pioneer of progressive mankind in the struggle for the happy future of all peoples.

This lends even greater significance to the exchange of the rich experiences and knowledge between our peoples in the construction of socialism and communism. The

German-Soviet Friendship Society is fully aware of its responsibility and obligations in this respect; we should like to emphasize this in particular at our present Congress. Through the fact that our Eighth Congress is taking place on the second anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty on Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Cooperation between the GDR and the USSR, we wish to underline a deeper internal connection. We are holding our Congress in the spirit of that agreement, linked with its tasks and noble aims.

The tasks adopted by the 11th session of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party for the second phase of the new economic system of planning and management are inseparably linked with the further consolidation of German-Soviet friendship and cooperation.

As you know, a parity government commission of the GDR and the USSR for economic, scientific and technical cooperation began its work in the middle of March. In this way an important institution has come into being which is systematically helping to develop scientific and economic cooperation in conformity with the long-range requirements of our countries.

Close cooperation with the Soviet Union will enable our Republic to do justice to its responsibility in economic competition with state monopoly capitalism in West Germany, and to fulfil its national mission even more effectively. This is above all served by the long-term trade agreement concluded at the end of last year. This agreement, unique in the world in its extent and significance, may with justification be described as the friendship treaty in action.

Entirely new relations have developed between the GDR and the USSR—relations of genuine friendship and fraternity. We jointly solve the tasks of socialist and communist construction in our countries and we jointly protect our achievements. The 23rd Congress of the CPSU has left no doubt as to the fact that the other European socialist countries will be reliably protected against all onslaughts from imperialist aggressors.

The new stage in German-Soviet friendship not only consists in a closer economic, scientific, technical and military cooperation between our countries. We are also linked by high human ideals. The German-Soviet Friendship Society pursues a high aim—to contribute each day and each hour, together with all citizens of our Republic, to strengthening the friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union to such an extent that the reactionary imperialist and revanchist forces in West Germany will never again be able to unleash a war from German soil.

Unconquered
Past

VII

The West German Federal Republic has been a hotbed of disturbance ever since its foundations. As a result of its anti-communist, revanchist and neo-nazi policy and practice, armament and militarization, it has become the main centre of war danger in Europe. The Kiesinger-Strauss government naturally denies this fact, and on frequent occasions Bonn even goes so far as to proclaim peaceful intentions. But is it not true that Hitler, too, camouflaged his attacks on foreign peoples by peaceful-sounding prattle up to the last minute? Facts speak for themselves.

The West German Federal Republic is one of the imperialist countries which most intensely cultivate anti-communism, raising it to be official state policy. The Bonn leaders ignore the words of Thomas Mann, the great humanist German writer who said:

"I think I am above suspicion of being a pioneer of communism. I can nevertheless not avoid seeing the bourgeois world's horror of communism, that terror on which fascism lived for so long, as somewhat superstitious and childish, as the basic folly of our age."

To be sure, anti-communism is childish and primitive. But it is also dangerous. In its name people have been killed and are still being killed, in its name there has been bloodshed and war. In its name new crimes are being prepared.

The German anti-fascist Herbert Gute, from 1949 to 1958 university professor in Berlin and subsequently Mayor of Dresden for some time, personally experienced the effects of anti-communism. That is why he wrote the following contribution.

Thoughts on Anti-Communism

We are living in a vastly liberal age. It is possible to proclaim that the earth is round and that it moves. It is possible to make discoveries without risking being detained in custody for life, as Böttger, the discoverer of porcelain was once detained in the Albrechtsburg in Meissen. It is even possible to criticize the German monopolists and their lackeys in West Germany. All these things are allowed—under one condition, of course: that nothing is done to touch the power of the West German imperialists.

The imperialists want the world to remain just as it is. Just as the earth was not allowed to revolve around the sun in the Middle Ages, all signs and attempts to recall human dignity and humane conduct and attitudes—it is no secret that such actions are not confined to communists—rouse fierce resistance. Those attempts are repressed not only by ideological means, but with every means at the disposal of those in power. All efforts to promote the cause of peace in the world are decried as "communist" heresy. If that was

all, one could dismiss those things with a smile as anachronistic folly. But that is not all. They did not stop at that. We lived to see it.

My recollections go back to the time after the First World War, when I gradually began to understand the nature of German imperialism. Everything I had experienced of good, noble and human values was defamed, distorted and brutally persecuted by those in power in Germany at the time. We young communists were branded—according to the situation—as foolish dreamers or dangerous rogues. When we called “Hands off Soviet Russia!”, we were condemned as traitors to the fatherland. When we fought for democratic freedoms, we were persecuted as rebels.

An unparalleled flood of lies about the Soviet Union intimidated and horrified the population to such an extent that all reactionary measures were welcomed as salvation in the face of threatening ruin. And when our work of enlightenment about the true nature of communism rendered their tales of horror increasingly dubious, they resorted to the “ultima ratio”, to brute force.

I spent seven years of my life in nazi prisons and concentration camps.

Towards the end of the Second World War one of the stations on my way was a corrective labour camp for foreigners at Radeberg near Dresden. On the second day after my arrival I wanted to wash myself and I asked a Czech where the washroom was. He pointed to a door at the other end of the barrack and said: “But not good! Bad! Don’t be frightened!”

Why should I be frightened, I did not expect a tiled bathroom with running hot and cold water.

Icy cold almost took my breath as I entered. Suddenly icy claws clutched at my heart: there lay a man, completely naked, as though made of dirty yellow wax. I shuddered—he was dead. Softly, on tiptoe, I withdrew and closed the door. When I turned round my eyes met those of the Czech. His eyes spoke of horror, grief and fear. With gritted teeth I returned to my comrades and slipped to the ground with closed eyes. I still saw the dead man before me.

No, you just cannot get used to it! Someone tried to calm us with the thoughtless phrase about getting used to it, after the others had told us that there were one or two corpses in the washroom every day.

Were those men communists who day by day were dragged pale and waxen into the washroom before they were covered with earth? Some of them no doubt were; but most of them had been men of very varied opinions. They had come from Poland, France, Czechoslovakia, and they had never taken part in political activity. One day the nazis

had herded them together in their native countries and transported them to Germany as slave labourers. Many of them had been arrested because they had dared to demand to be treated as human beings. One or the other had won the affection of a German girl. That had been enough to cause his imprisonment in the camp. He was of an "inferior" race. He was not a Jew—Jews were sent to death factories like Auschwitz—but the race-mania is a creeper that grows abundantly in the quagmire of anti-communism.

"No! You cannot get used to it! To get used to it would mean accepting it. Grow hard and still harder!" a comrade uttered these words, like a command.

Another said: "I think that even though we cannot do much to change conditions from here, we should start thinking about what we should do once all this is over and we are home again."

"What for," said Zechel, "I shan't live to see it anyway."

"Don't be a fool, Kurt! A chap like you shouldn't talk such rot!"

"No, no," he said, weak and exhausted as he was, he insisted that he felt his forces dwindling and that he felt it would soon be all over for him. He had influenza.

In the front part of the hut a small section was separated from the rest. It was marked by a board inscribed "Sickroom". That word was a mockery, an indescribable mockery of the conditions that prevailed there. The prisoner functioning as attendant had no thermometer, no medicaments, nothing. On each straw mattress there were two men; groaning and lamentations filled the air.

And that is how the battle for Kurt Zechel's life began. If only he had fought as well! A smile of resignation was his only reaction to everything we did. Each of us took off his coat for an hour to cover him up. One had a towel which we used for compresses. We took it in turns to look after him day and night. Each of us tried to encourage him in whispered words. Encouragement instead of medicine!

Two days later, when the shrill whistles and the shouts of the SS guards tore us out of our sleep, our first thought was of Kurt; but he was cold and stiff.

Kurt Zechel, a quiet German skilled worker had raised his clenched fist in 1933. When the German imperialists had unleashed the war he listened to the radio stations of the anti-Hitler coalition. He had listened to London and to Moscow and spoke about the things he had heard on the radio with his workmates at the Sachsenwerk in Dresden, a factory in those days owned by the AEG trust. That was enough to sentence him to a term of three years at hard labour.

The Sachsenwerk had sealed his fate. As a prisoner on remand he had worked as a turner in a department of that factory. He was transferred to the Waldheim penitentiary;

there, too, the Sachsenwerk had installed a department and again Zechel had to work there as a turner. And at the "corrective labour camp" at Radeberg he again worked for the Sachsenwerk as a turner for ten hours a day. Until he could work no more and we had to lay him down naked on the floor of the washroom.

While millions were dying in this and countless other ways, millions of Germans—hypnotized by the ogre of communism—were serving the aims of German imperialism. And even when they had been seized by the extermination machinery, anti-communism still polluted their minds.

In February 1945, a few days before the destruction of my home town of Dresden, I had an encounter with such a man. A farmer from Mecklenburg named Albert Meinert had been imprisoned and sat opposite me in the cell of the Dresden police prison. He told me how he had been arrested.

His grandfather had originally been an officer. When he married he had left the army and with the capital brought into the marriage by his wife he had purchased a farm. They had about forty hectares of land. They managed their farm as well as they could, but it was only Meinert's father who had had a proper agricultural training, who developed the farm. Albert Meinert, too, had had a college training. He was a graduate in agricultural science. He had managed to build up a model farm and to acquire part of the land which his neighbour, who was doing badly, was obliged to give up so as to be able to pay his debts. That was shortly before the First World War in which Meinert fought as a reserve officer. The neighbour enviously observed Meinert's success, and when Hitler came to power he turned out to be a nazi, became the local peasant leader and tried to cause Meinert's ruin. Yet this proved to be rather complicated; for one thing the nazi could not measure his skill and ability with the efficient farmer, for another thing Meinert was known as a man of nationalist opinions, who had been decorated in 1916 with the Iron Cross, First Class (war decoration—editor). So the local peasant leader took a careful look at Meinert's family tree and finally discovered that Albert's grandmother had been a Jewess.

"And now I'm here," he finished his account.

"So now you're here," I repeated his words in contemplation and scrutinized his face as I added: "And now you are waiting, as I am, for the Red Army to set us free. You said that you had always been a nationally-minded man. So am I. And . . ."

He interrupted me in astonishment: "But aren't you a communist?"

"Aren't communists Germans?"

Meinert jumped up. "Excuse me, I don't want to offend you—but you seem so different from communists in general."

"How many of them have you known up to now?"

He had not only not known any, he did not even know what communism really was. He was entirely blinded by anti-communism. He was an eloquent example of the methods used by that reactionary ideology and its effects. There is not even an attempt at rationally disproving the arguments of communism. How could there be—for this would require an explanation of its principles in order to prove that they are wrong. Anti-communism is a modern form of the medieval persecution of heretics. Of course not quite as crude—people today no longer believe in witches. But they do believe in the printed word, in film scenes, in radio reports. And even when the lies are dished up in glaring colours people often say: Where there is smoke there is fire. Some of it must be true!

My cell-mate also had some difficulty in casting aside his anti-communist prejudices.

I asked him: "Do you consider it part of the German character you so highly praise, that people who have different opinions; that Slavs or Jews or Frenchmen should be described as inferior beings? That under the pretext of their alleged inferiority they should be hounded and brutally exterminated? Don't you see that you are also now one of those so-called inferior creatures and that the same fate may well be awaiting you?"

Terror changed his expression and in a voice that had lost all its former self-assurance he whispered: "You think that they could . . . even with me . . .?"

It is a historical fact that the first blow by all reactionaries of all countries is always directed against the communists. This is frequently considered justified by people of other world outlooks, or at least tolerated by them—until the next blow falls on their own heads. Then they are shocked and bewildered that they are treated in no better way than we are. No one listens to their protest, to their assertions that they are not communists. And such a defence itself contains a good bit of anti-communism.

I am thinking of a group of twelve Bulgarian students whose acquaintance I made at the "corrective labour camp" in Radeberg. At that time they were not communists. In the middle of the war they had taken up their studies at the Technical College in Dresden. In their country communists were also being persecuted. In 1944, when Bulgaria was liberated by the Soviet Army and withdrew from the war, those students rejoiced that peace had started for their country. They had given expression to these feelings—that sufficed to lock them up in the camp.

One morning during roll-call they were asked to step forward together with a hundred others, including myself. The camp inmates went out to work; we were sent back to

our huts. Half an hour later two of the Bulgarian students came to me. "We shall be released!" they said exultantly. I was sceptical and asked them a few questions. They reported that they had seen the commander, who told them that they were to be transferred to Weimar to be released, as our files were there.

"Now you listen to me quite calmly! Do you know what is in the vicinity of Weimar?"

They knit their brows questioningly.

"Buchenwald! Buchenwald concentration camp. A mean joke of that commander!"

The Bulgarians were frightened, drew back and stammered: "But they couldn't do that to us . . . we are not . . ."

No, they were not communists.

Only two out of those twelve Bulgarians survived Buchenwald. I met them two years ago. Now they are communists.

I am not writing these lines to make propaganda for communism. I am writing them as one who managed, thanks to a series of lucky coincidences, to survive German fascism. Millions of decent people did not survive. That is what forces me to take to the pen. There must never again be concentration camps. And there need be no more of them, if anti-communism is recognized for what it is.

Industrialists and bankers, however, continue to fear the end of their power. In their fear they make communism into a spectre in which they themselves do not believe. The imperialists and militarists of West Germany above all conduct a merciless struggle against all who fight for peace and freedom. They know that their blows will hit not only communists, but also fall on harmless reformers and critically-minded thinkers. No matter! Preferably one more innocent man persecuted or imprisoned than one less communist. That was their slogan and that is still their slogan today. They only have one recipe: turn the facts upside down, sustain the thief! Not the murderer is guilty but the murdered. The Jews were presented as the inventors of communism—and so the Jews had to die. Elsewhere it is the people with a black skin who are said to be "threatening civilization". So they are the same as communists; ergo they may be killed.

We are living in a vastly liberal age. We may say all that we consider to be correct—so the West German manufacturers of opinions allege. But may we also do the things that we consider to be right?

You may say less and less today. Otherwise you will give rise to a state of "emergency". The West German government is laying the legal foundations of the emergency with the greatest thoroughness.

We are living in a vastly moral age. The future murderer is already guaranteed protection by law if he can prove that he acted under orders—in the name of anti-communism.

In 1956 the government of the West German Federal Republic prohibited the Communist Party of Germany. Eleven years after the Hitler war those Germans who had suffered the most under the nazi regime and who had conducted the most determined struggle against it were persecuted and imprisoned. This unparalleled unscrupulousness is an example of anti-communism in action.

The Soviet journalist P. Naumov, member of the editorial staff of the periodical Sa Rubeshom, witnessed the disgraceful prohibition proceedings conducted against that party.

The Unyielding

It was indeed a monstrous trial. Everything bewildered and depressed the foreign observers who had come to Karlsruhe, even the external circumstances. The town of Karlsruhe is quiet and green, reminiscent of pre-war Bonn, a regular reservation for officials, philistines and retired persons. The former palace of Prince Max von Baden, occupied since 1951 by the Constitutional Court of the Federal Republic newly established in those days, is a long rambling building of two floors, clearly deviating in appearance from the traditional cool and spacious buildings of German law courts.

The court met in the former dining hall of Prince Max, with a capacity of barely one hundred persons. It was almost as though everything had been arranged so as to ensure that this trial would be conducted without sensation, aloof from the main lines of big politics, out of the way of the working people. Yet those calculations proved to have been incorrect.

On the very first days of the trial against the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) the police concentrated in the town had to make use of water-jets. The whole press devoted great attention to the trial and it was considered as a particularly scandalous event. The world recognized in this trial the first openly revanchist action of the overthrown Third Reich. The successors of Hitler Germany, who had donned bourgeois-democratic garb, decided to vent their rage on those within their reach, on the communists in their own country. And thus West German communists were not facing judges but their hereditary

political enemies. Naturally these proceedings were no trial, but a settlement of accounts by force.

And this is what it looked like: on the rostrum, around a long table, the judges sat in spacious, raspberry-coloured robes under the federal German eagle. The nazi past of some of them was generally known. Even the president of the court, Wintrich, had functioned as a judge under Hitler.

Facing them, in the front row on the right side of the hall, sat the representatives of the Bonn government who had applied for the prohibition of the Communist Party. The "Bonn team" was headed by Ritter von Lex, the same man who in March 1933 had hailed Hitler's accession to power as an "historical revolution" and voted in favour of Hitler's "Enabling Act" in the Reichstag on behalf of the Bavarian People's Party. Thereafter von Lex had come to occupy a leading post in the nazi Ministry of the Interior on the recommendation of Hitler's henchman Frick, and was responsible for the "extirpation" of Marxism in Germany. And now this phantom of the past appeared as state secretary of the Federal German Ministry of the Interior in the pose of a watchman of the "free and democratic social order". The decisive part in the prosecution played by the federal government was taken by attorney Dix, in 1946 defence counsel of war criminals at Nuremberg (among them the financial magnate Schacht, the cannon-king Flick and the heads of the IG-Farben trust).

At a certain stage of the proceedings the old professor of law Kaufmann appeared as defender and interpreter of the Bonn laws. Already in 1921 Kaufmann had justified the violation of international agreements in one of his essays, stating that the basic idea of international law was the formula: "he who can, may." In his book *Bismarck's Erbe in der Reichsverfassung* (Bismarck's Legacy in the Reich Constitution) published in 1917 this theoretician of aggressive German imperialism wrote:

"To us, on the other hand, war is a link in the divine order of the universe, a sacred judgement in which the true power of the strong becomes manifest . . . the great test showing whether the international distribution of power was correct, or whether it should be replaced by a more correct or better one."

The KPD was represented in court by defence counsels. The representatives delegated by the KPD leadership had only limited opportunities to attend the proceedings. Two of them, Fritz Rische and Jupp Ledwohn were locked up in West German prisons. An arrest warrant had been issued against two others, Max Reimann and Walter Fisch. At the end of the first week Walter Fisch was assured "safe conduct" which enabled him to come to Karlsruhe.

Yet the following occurred during the proceedings on 30 November 1954, a week after the opening of the trial: the legal representatives of the Communist Party drew the balance of the first week of the trial at the beginning of that day and listed the occasions on which the rights of the KPD had been violated and spoke about the unlawful decision of the judges to ignore the rejection of a number of members of the jury requested by the KPD on account of their presumed bias by reason of their nazi past; they spoke about the hearing of a witness without the knowledge of the KPD and about the fact that the documents submitted to the court by the Bonn government had been concealed from the representative of the KPD. They pointed out the outrageous violation of the principle of equality of the two contesting parties guaranteed by the Federal Constitutional Court Law and they demanded the withdrawal of the arrest warrant against the leading representatives of the KPD who had been delegated by the KPD leadership as representatives of the KPD before the Constitutional Court.

The government representatives insisted that the proceedings be continued. The court complied with their request.

The following scene took place in the course of the events that followed: President Wintrich stated that he allowed the "authorized gentlemen representing the defendant" (i. e. the KPD-author), "to speak in order to make a matter-of-fact comment on the application," that is to say, to state their point of view in regard to the complaints of the Bonn government. KPD representative Walter Fisch rose from his place. Wintrich pulled an astonished face and, with a gesture of casual imperturbability, he pronounced a sentence prepared long in advance: "Herr Fisch, I establish that you have not been given the right to speak. . . It is the task of the legal representative to make applications here and to substantiate them."

The KPD legal representatives objected: von Lex could appear in court not as an attorney but as a representative of the federal government. Why should the KPD not have the right to appear in the person of its experienced leaders?

The Senate rejected the application of the KPD representatives to allow Walter Fisch to speak, since only attorneys and not party representatives could take the floor. Walter Fisch was accordingly not allowed to expound the political objectives of the KPD, because in contrast to Ritter von Lex, Fisch was not a trained lawyer.

The KPD was accused of intending to overthrow the liberal democratic constitutional order in West Germany, of "threatening the existence of the Federal Republic". Various "evidence" was produced. Thus, for example, the support by the KPD of the plebiscite on remilitarization and other examples, to quotations from the works of

Lenin. One of the "crimes" of the KPD was said to consist in alarming the public in the Federal Republic about the dangers of remilitarization. Ritter von Lex described such actions as "communist calumny", and Adenauer was meanwhile leafing through the Paris Agreements signed in Bonn a short time before, and the plans for the establishment of a Bundeswehr of 500,000 men.

The trial was not only a mockery of common sense, of the elementary concepts of justice, morals, honesty and decency, but the Bonn prosecutors also made shameful mockery of the provisions of the Potsdam Agreement, sealed with the blood of millions of people. The KPD quite justly referred to the Potsdam Agreement which had served the occupation powers as a basis for allowing freedom of action to the KPD. The Bonn government did not want to recognize those provisions. The above-mentioned Professor Kaufmann described the Potsdam Agreement as a "measure of intervention" which was "in contradiction to the prohibition of intervention by international law" and which was therefore "valid only for the contractors" i.e., the four allied powers.

That was the level of statements made by the representatives of the Bonn government. No wonder, therefore, that the Bonn government and its judges continuously became involved in awkward situations. The legal representative of the KPD had no difficulty in proving the contradictions in the accusation according to which the KPD had committed "unconstitutional actions". The proceedings were repeatedly interrupted, sometimes for as much as a week or even longer, so that the "Bonn team" might be able to invent further complaints. It was all of no avail. In the middle of December Wintrich announced a break in the trial of six weeks. After expiration of that period new interruptions followed. The "guilt" of the KPD could not be proved with any more conclusive evidence.

One and a half years went by. The nerves of the politicians in Bonn could no longer stand the tension; the Paris Agreements had been ratified, the establishment of the Bundeswehr was in full swing and in Karlsruhe they were unable to cope with the communists. Bonn decided to intervene openly in the proceedings. In July 1956 the Bonn government brought in the draft of an "Amendment of the Law on the Federal Constitutional Court" to the West German Bundestag. That draft was adopted on 21 July 1956. It envisaged withdrawing the proceedings against the KPD from the First Senate of the Federal Constitutional Court and giving it to the Second Senate, unless a verdict was pronounced against the KPD within the following six weeks. After this warning shot from the federal government the judges at Karlsruhe were forced to stop staging a display of feigned justice and proceed in the way so frequently applied

under Hitler: to pronounce a sentence to the liking of those in power, without going into any speculations about the ways and means of glossing over an act of naked violence.

Those who attentively followed events at the KPD trial or subsequently studied the relevant documents will know that in truth there had been no preliminary investigations at Karlsruhe. There had only been an act of arbitrary force that could not be legally concealed. The "guilt" of the KPD was not proved, since there was no guilt in the first place. The KPD was prohibited because the gentlemen in power in West Germany wanted it that way.

This was evident to all sides and it was openly stated. The British *Manchester Guardian* commented: "The absurdity of the case could not have been more clearly demonstrated than by the fact that KPD chairman Max Reimann could not be asked to participate in the proceedings, because a warrant of arrest had already been issued on the grounds of accusations which are now being investigated." Even the West German bourgeois press called the legality of these proceedings in question. The *Süd-deutsche Zeitung* described the court as a "monster show". The only way to avoid a scandal would be to call off the trial altogether. And now Bonn was making an innocent face if called upon to repeal the ban on the KPD, stating: "It's not our fault, the Communist Party was prohibited by the Constitutional Court on account of the proved guilt of the communists."

It is possible to hide under the cover of such hypocritical phrases for a time, but the outrageous acts of violence perpetrated by the ruling forces of the Federal Republic against the KPD can never be justified before the judgement of history.

Ten years ago Bonn propaganda proclaimed the ultimate end of the KPD.

In 1966 the German federal government was forced to admit in an official report of its Ministry of the Interior that "All KPD district committees in the Federal Republic were operatively effective. There were also local committees in operation in various regions. It was possible to maintain the party machinery, in some cases even to augment it and to reconstruct it after the executive measures."

The report on the activities of the West German communists continued by stating that "the KPD had succeeded in improving its 'open' activities with locally varying success and extending them . . ."

Yes, the Communist Party of Germany lives and continues to fight in spite of the prohibition. It had to overcome enormous difficulties linked with its transition to underground work. Many of its representatives were imprisoned several times. In our days as

well the world frequently witnesses trials of dissidents in West Germany. Time and again people are dragged to court or thrown into prison under the pretext that they had violated the law on the prohibition of the KPD.

In its official report the Federal Ministry of the Interior pointed out in the spring of 1966 that during the previous year the public prosecutors had had to deal with 2,400 cases of that kind. The number of political proceedings introduced, according to information recently made known in the Bundestag, was:

5,000 in 1961, 3,800 in 1962, 2,100 in 1963, about 3,000 in 1964.

In the face of uninterrupted terror the Communist Party of Germany not only maintained its ranks, but even attained successes which had to be recognized even by the adversary. That is the admirable balance of more than ten years of underground struggle.

In recent years thousands of new members have joined the ranks of the KPD, mainly from among working-class youth. Many workers in West Germany show their confidence in the communists by electing them to bodies defending the interests of the working people. Interest in the opinion of communists on the vital issues of home and foreign policy is also increasing.

The reason for these symptoms is the policy of the KPD, which reflects the vital national and social interests of the people, their striving for progress and peace. "Our Party works for the transformation of the Federal Republic into a democratic and peace-loving state," the first secretary of the Central Committee of the KPD, Max Reimann, declared. "The highest principle of our party policy which is based on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism is to prevent a new war from starting from West Germany. The principle of the KPD was, is and remains working-class unity in action, joint action by communists and social democrats. Unity in action by the working class in the struggle against imperialism and revanchism, against the anti-national policy of the CDU/CSU leadership offer the guarantee of the concentration of all forces of our people striving for peace, democracy and social security."

These few words express the essence of the KPD's present political program. This program, established at the party congress in 1963, has not only become the guiding principle of the party, but also called forth a wide response among the various sections of the West German population. Its core is the idea of the creation of a broad alliance of all forces of peace in West Germany to resist reaction and militarism.

The KPD indefatigably explains to the workers that socialism has already triumphed in one part of Germany, in the German Democratic Republic. Without recognition of the fact that two German states exist no progress can be made in the development of relations

between them. "If we want peace for our people," the KPD wrote in its letter to the delegates of the Social Democratic Party in Dortmund, "it is necessary to reject the militarist policy of strength and atomic armament. Matter-of-fact relations must be taken up with the GDR, and the Federal Republic must be persuaded to make its contribution to disarmament and the establishment of an atomic-weapon-free zone in Central Europe."

Actions in West Germany for the revocation of the KPD ban have become more numerous and comprehensive. In April 1966 the Committee for Political Freedoms in Hamburg collected 2,200 signatures from Hamburg citizens under an appeal to the Bundestag for the repeal of the KPD ban. A corresponding request to the Bundestag was made by 2,000 inhabitants of Düsseldorf. In November 1964 the repeal of the KPD ban was demanded by 2,260 inhabitants of Rhineland-Palatinate in a petition to deputies in Bonn. A similar appeal was addressed to the Bundestag by 1,500 citizens of Heidelberg in May 1965, and on other occasions from many other towns.

Hundreds of resolutions to this effect have been adopted at meetings of various youth and student associations and by social democratic and other organizations, at public meetings and forums.

The fact that many citizens of the Federal Republic are calling for the legalization of the KPD is motivated by their awareness of direct links between the prohibition and the present endeavours of reactionary forces to make the Constitution practically ineffective by means of the emergency laws.

That is why the movement to lift the ban on the KPD constitutes part of the increasingly powerful movement in defence of democracy in West Germany. The prominent citizen of Düsseldorf, Otto Schönfeld, wrote in the letter which accompanied a petition to the Bundestag signed by 2,000 citizens of Düsseldorf: "The legalization of the KPD is a problem of our democracy... The restoration of the freedom of political activity for the KPD would reduce the danger of the development of the Federal Republic into a police state and the danger of an abuse of justice. The political climate between East and West Germany would be considerably improved."

The statement at a meeting in Hilden by ex-Minister of Justice Bucher (FDP) is worth noting: "I consider the KPD prohibition to be wrong. It was the political decision of the federal government, not of the Federal Constitutional Court."

The movement to defend the KPD extended beyond the German frontiers. According to calculations by the Bonn government, 6,000 articles had been published in the foreign press during the second half of 1966 calling for the revocation of the KPD ban.

The peoples of Europe cannot remain indifferent to the centre of reaction and "legal-

ized" arbitrary rule developed in the middle of our continent. It is generally known that the ruling circles in the Federal Republic had hoped, by the trial of the KPD, to call forth a chain reaction of anti-communism and to enforce the prohibition of communist parties throughout the whole of Western Europe.

Developments, however, took a different course from that expected by Bonn. The persistent endeavour of the federal government to maintain the prohibition of the KPD is justifiably regarded as a challenge to European public opinion, as a mockery of the memory of millions of citizens of our continent who gave their lives in the struggle against nazi tyranny, as threat to the democratic rights of the peoples of the whole of Western Europe.

The revanchist claims raised by the ruling circles in West Germany to territories of other states and to atomic weapons are closely linked with the persecution of the forces of peace within the country, the core of which is the communists. That is why the struggle for the revocation of the KPD ban is part of the struggle of the peoples for peace in Europe, against the danger emanating from revanchist circles in the Federal Republic.

The rulers of West Germany have always disregarded the will and striving of neighbouring peoples. Faithful to the "Greater German" custom, they consider themselves only as the masters, not as partners in the European arena. As a natural result a growing mistrust of the Federal Republic has developed. Many songs of woe may be heard about this fact from the banks of the Rhine.

As long as Bonn does not abandon its unreasonable idea of revising the map of Europe, its claims for atomic armament and its Gestapo practices in its internal affairs, it cannot hope for the confidence of other peoples. The justified mistrust of the Federal Republic and its political aims is based not least on the shameful prohibition of the KPD, a particularly concentrated expression of the reactionary, undemocratic essence of the Bonn government.

With a little good-will and reason, with a somewhat realistic estimate of the relation of forces on the part of those responsible in the Federal Republic, the situation in Europe could be entirely different. The Soviet Union made numerous efforts to improve relations with Bonn; the GDR has made more than 150 offers and proposals to the Bundestag and the federal government on subjects including renunciation by both German states of the control over atomic weapons of every kind, recognition of existing frontiers, disarmament measures, participation in an atomic-weapon-free zone, a joint declaration on the renunciation of force, establishment of normal relations between the two German states.

The ruling circles of the Federal Republic always said "No". Instead of making even the slightest contribution to understanding and peace, they are insisting on their sole representation claim, bringing to a head that potential declaration of war against the GDR, they seek by every means to obtain control over nuclear weapons, they insist on the restoration of the frontiers of 1937 and revanchism is allowed to flourish and pollute the atmosphere.

Horst Aldus, a GDR journalist, experienced many characteristic and alarming episodes in the course of travels in West Germany.

The Poison Has a Permanent Effect

Hamburg-Fuhlsbüttel. Hectic activity in the halls of the airport buildings. Coming and going, tears of parting and joyful meetings side by side. The buzz of voices. Fragments of conversations which are forgotten as quickly as they are heard.

The impression of an incomplete sentence uttered by a tourist from a state in the north of Europe, judging by his accent, penetrates the mind: "... but I must say, after touring the Federal Republic for 14 days, there is not a trace of revanchism, hardly any soldiers ..."

Since I have had several opportunities to travel in West Germany as a journalist, this fragmentary remark caught up in passing, involuntarily made me confront it with my own experiences and feelings.

Admittedly the majestic beauty of the Bavarian Alps, the imposing sight of the port of Hamburg, the mysterious rustling of the Spessart woods, the unique reliefs of a Peter Vischer in the Sebaldus church in Nuremberg, or the picturesque, romantic atmosphere of the birth place of Beethoven in Bonn, may well fascinate the visitor without any thought of political intrigues or the dangers in international relations entering his mind. If you were to look for marching columns of men in brown uniforms bawling revanchist slogans in the city of Frankfurt as symptoms of revived revanchism, you would look in vain. Revanchism has assumed a different shape. SA uniforms have become somewhat unfashionable; not so the spirit that moved those who wore them, which still prevails.

Munich. On the first floor of the "Schwabinger Bräu", one of the largest meeting-place inns of the Bavarian capital, the atmosphere is heavy with smoke, mingled with the

odour of cabbage and white sausages. Waitresses in Bavarian national costume carry beer mugs from the bar to the tables covered with Bavarian blue and white cloths. A brass band, fittingly dressed in black, white and red, concludes its music with the traditional drinking song "Ein Prosit, ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit", as if the next item on the program would be a noisy drinking bout. Yet the scene that is just about to take place before the eyes of some thousand spectators is far from merry-making; it recalls a time when only a few hundred metres from here, down the Leopold Street, at the Feldherrnhalle, Hitler began his putsch. That was in 1923. Ten years later he was brought to power in order to "solve frontier problems" for the German trusts in the militarist-German way, for a period subjugating almost the whole of Europe.

In 1966 the neo-nazi National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) convened a meeting in the "Capital of the Movement". The first speaker at the meeting, a certain Dr. Hermannsdörfer, let off a furious tirade of abuse against what he described as "politicians of renunciation", meaning all those who take a realistic attitude towards the results of the Second World War and recognize the present frontiers in Europe. The speaker—who obviously wanted to be taken seriously, being a senate councillor and federal judge—proclaimed to his audience in a menacing voice, that "Pan-Slavism would not be content with the Oder-Neisse frontier," but considered it as a mere beginning. Some laughter in the hall irritated the worthy judge and prompted him to intensify his virulence: "The Poles want to lay their hands on the Hamburg-Triest line!" he thundered at his listeners—being careful not to indicate the source of his sensational revelations. And thereafter the atmosphere was dominated by the feeling—tacit, yet amply clear—of the urgent need to counteract those "frightful plans" of the Poles, to hasten ahead of them and lose no time in retrieving the old German territories.

In Hitler's day the motto had been: "Wo des Deutschen Zunge klingt, da ist des Deutschen Vaterland" (Wherever the German tongue resounds, there is the German fatherland). Ergo: territories colonized in the past and present by "German tribes" must be brought "back home to the Reich". In the "Principles of Our Policy" of the present NPD under figure XI this is expressed as follows: "Germany has a claim to the territories on which the German people have grown for centuries." The ways and means by which this "claim" is to be pursued are likewise postulated in those principles: "The courageous attitude of German soldiers at all times must be the example of the Bundeswehr . . . The soldier should know for what values he is fighting . . . As long as the fathers are branded as criminals publicly and without punishment the sons cannot be good soldiers."

More than seven hundred registered NPD members are once again active in this spirit as officers of the West German army. Yet this is by no means only the program of a radical right-wing party. Let me quote only one out of the chorus of similar voices—that of CDU Bundestag deputy Majonica: “In our foreign policy we have very far-reaching aims. Reunification means the radical alteration of the relations of power as established in Europe since the Second World War . . . The results of a war have very rarely been subsequently corrected by peaceful means.”

Bonn. Great military parade of the Bundeswehr. Young seamen of the West German navy, airmen of the Luftwaffe and soldiers of the army are marching in formation. Heavy thumping of kettle-drums; hundreds of torches casting ghostly shadows. On the terrace of the new Beethoven Hall General de Maizière—today chief of the Bundeswehr—stands smiling. His chest glitters with medals once awarded him by Hitler. As a general staff officer in the fascist Wehrmacht de Maizière had once already helped to break down frontiers in the west and east, the north and south, to extend the domain of power of the reactionary German big bourgeoisie.

The glorification of those acts of war as deeds of heroism, accompanied by untold atrocities, is not only advocated in the principles of the NPD; this practice has always been part and parcel of the “traditions” of the West German armed forces (which, by the way, have become the most powerful military force in Western Europe). The training regulations, No. 3/65, for example, provide that “there are no objections to hanging pictures—mostly photographs—of outstanding military leaders, troop commanders or soldiers of the Second World War in the original, even if they inevitably show insignia or medals of the Third Reich in their original form.”

The swastika is once again in demand. The “traditions” cultivated in the Bundeswehr also include songs sung by the infantrymen such as this: “Wie einst in Polen, Flandern und im heißen Wüstensand, stürmen wir Bundeswehrgrenadiere das fremde Land.” (As once in Poland, Flanders and in hot desert sands, we, soldiers of the Bundeswehr today storm foreign lands).

That night in Bonn, at the end of the military parade, the old German national anthem resounded over the Rhine: “Deutschland, Deutschland, über alles, über alles in der Welt” (Germany, Germany, above everything, above everything in the world). What kind of a Germany were those boys taught to have in mind, as they stood before us in their Bundeswehr uniforms, and who passed through the federal German school in the literal sense of the word?

Gelsenkirchen. In the home of a miner's family. I leaf through the school books of the twelve-year-old son. *German Regions and the Neighbouring Countries of Germany in the South and East* was the title of one of them, a geography textbook, published by the Ernst Klett Verlag, Munich.

In the description of the "North-east German lowlands" this book states on page 24: "Here old German regions are situated, regions which we should well note." And then places are enumerated which have long since ceased to belong to Germany, but which, as the textbook demands, we should well note: Pomerania, West and East Prussia, Silesia. "The German population was driven out of those territories, with the exception of a few remnants. Only Schleswig-Holstein still belongs to the Federal Republic."

Not a word about why this should be so. The thought that German imperialism forfeited these territories by its aggressions against other peoples is not even allowed to come up.

"What are the regions along the German Baltic coast up to the mouth of the Memel called?" is a test question. The question concerns a *German* Baltic sea coast, 500 kilometres of which are part of the Polish and Soviet coastal areas! Incessant repetitions of terms such as "old German region", "expelled persons", and so on and so forth. Page after page the revanchist claim of the West German government to foreign territories is imprinted and hammered into the minds of the children. With great persistence the idea of the great advantages of the recovery of all those territories is nurtured: "Pomerania used to be Germany's most important rye and potato growing area . . . Potatoes were used in Pomerania to feed a large number of pigs, the meat and fat of which supplied many large towns."

The demands of NPD propagandists in Munich are found here, a political nourishment for the young generation, faithful to the old fascist conception of a "people without living space". The sanguinary and cruel campaigns instigated by German industrial magnates against the east are minimized in the following way:

"Protected by the knights and castles many German peasants had come to the east . . . They and their descendants lived there for almost 700 years, until nearly all Germans were driven out of those parts after the Second World War."

The school children are asked in that book about the largest German lakes. As an answer the book mentions, among others, the Mauer and Spirdingsee. German lakes? Hundreds of kilometres inside foreign territory, with three frontiers between them and the Federal Republic. Thus are the vile seeds of revanchist demands sown in the minds of children at an early age; they are imbued with the idea of the need to correct the

longer recognized as revanchism, at least not by superficial tourists. Yet the danger lies precisely in this intended acceptance of revanchist demands as a matter of course and as legitimate. . .

Personal impressions and emotions are accompanied by facts which complete the picture: every one of the four political parties represented in the West German parliament, the Bundestag—the Christian Democratic Union, the Christian Social Union, the Social Democratic Party, the Free Democratic Party—demands the reconquest of the German frontiers, to begin with, at least those of 1937. The Federal Republic is the only state in Europe which raises territorial demands against other countries. For this purpose it has, in addition to a ministry of war, a Ministry for Expelled Persons and a Ministry of All-German Affairs which are exclusively concerned with the implementation of revanchist demands and the financing of revanchist associations. Twenty-nine associations of fellow countrymen, such as that of the Silesians, the Sudeten Germans, the West Prussians, the East Prussians, the Baltic Germans, the Hungarian Germans, the Transylvanian Saxons and others, as well as some dozens of revanchist associations organized on a cultural, political, religious or vocational basis, are keeping alive the thoughts of revenge, stirring up hatred, raising territorial claims, which go far beyond the official claims of Bonn. Every year ministers and high-ranking Bundeswehr officers together with revanchist leaders appear at “Homeland Gatherings” and “Federal Meetings” and at parades of those associations. Cultural foundations, circles, research centres and other bodies functioning as revanchist agencies under various labels do their part to hammer into the minds of federal German citizens the idea of the allegedly legitimate claim to foreign territories.

This is how you will encounter revanchism—in cynically plain revelation, or carefully camouflaged, at noisy parades, or on silent posters, in cheap trashy reading matter and colourful school books, ever present as a component of federal German state doctrine.

Together with the Soviet Union and many other states the German Democratic Republic raises its voice in warning against the fatal developments in the West German Federal Republic. In that state the Potsdam Agreement was not fulfilled in any respect. The same trusts with the same names, the same generals, only in different uniforms, the same policy and in part even the same politicians. Old and new fascists are again to organize, they have their own party.

E. Grigoryev, a journalist of the Moscow Pravda, who has first-hand experience of life in West Germany wrote:

Not Only the Shadows of the Past

In 1945 he was three years old; today he is 24. No one made this sympathetic young man immune to fascism, as the humiliation and tragedy of the fatal events of recent German history would have required. Gustav had only a very confused idea of all these things, because when he served in the Bundeswehr his instructor had said: "What happened is past, no one could make us responsible for the things which happened in those days!"

I asked him: "Would you today vote for the National Democrats?" (neo-nazi party in the West German Federal Republic—editor).

He drew on his cigarette and replied: "In principle—why not, if the NPD proposes an appropriate program! In one election I voted for the CDU, in the other for the Social Democrats. We shall live and see what happens."

His friends standing around shake their heads: "Oh, he's just talking bunkum."

No, Gustav is not typical of the West German worker of today. In fact it is precisely among working-class youth and in the trade unions that deep anxiety is becoming increasingly widespread. At the same time there is a growing effort to resist the neo-fascists resolutely.

And yet, are there really only a few people who at one or the other point in the development of West Germany become involved in the trap set by the neo-fascists?

Since the elections in Hesse and Bavaria in 1966 this question can no longer be cast aside with a shrug of the shoulders. The National Democratic Party (NPD), a collecting centre of old and new fascists, has moved into the parliaments of two federal provinces. Those self-styled democrats won several thousands of votes; many people in West Germany consider the penetration of that fascist party—which has existed for scarcely two years—into the parliaments of other provinces as quite possible. There are only a few who doubt that the neo-nazis will also be given a seat and vote in the Bundestag after the next elections.

The "Grand Coalition" formed in Bonn unfortunately leaves room for such developments. In case parliamentary opposition should be practically eliminated, which is the present tendency, the NPD could to an even greater extent become a focal point of discontented voters. This view is also shared by prominent representatives of the CDU and the Social Democratic Party.

Nevertheless, an ironical, condescending, self-satisfied attitude may be observed in this connection among political circles in Bonn (forty years ago many had adopted a similar attitude towards Hitler). Only a few realistically thinking social democratic

deputies still show some signs of anxiety; among their coalition partners, however, there are frequent endeavours to substantiate the rise of the NPD with historic motives and to present that party as a conservative factor. This is an attempt to conceal the danger of neo-fascism.

"You should understand," a CDU leader said in a conversation, "all our constituents are conservative, some of them even right-wing radicals. Personally, I consider this to be entirely normal; hotheads have always existed and will always exist."

The following episode may serve to elucidate this.

On a grey winter day in the Rhine country, when the partners of the newly-formed "Grand Coalition" in Bonn had just finished distributing the ministerial posts, a solid limousine drew up in front of the Bundestag building. A tall, rather awkward-looking man in a uniform reminiscent of that of the fighter pilots of the air force of Hitler Germany got out of the car and went resolutely up to the entrance, declaring: "I am the new Reich chancellor; and now let me establish the new Reich!"

This man, a certain Fritz Schäfer, was handed over to the police. Some journalists in Bonn commented on the details of the scene with the judgement: "probably a lunatic!"

True enough—what normal man would make his way into a parliament building in broad daylight and demand a position of power?

On the other hand the question must arise as to whether it was really only a matter of folly arisen on the soil of neo-fascism, or whether it should rather be considered as an open onslaught of the "old-timers". The prank of this Schäfer, a neo-fascist demonstration, on the whole fits well into the picture of political developments of recent years in that state.

The CDU deputy mentioned earlier tried to minimize these things, he even came forward with "evidence"; there are no social prerequisites for the return of fascism, he said, because the things which at the beginning of the nineteen-thirties helped Hitler to power, millions of unemployed and starvation, did not exist in the Federal Republic today.

It cannot be denied that in the development of Hitler fascism the social situation assumed a certain importance, but it was not the decisive factor. The decisive factor was the monopolists seeking for a "strong hand" and "lasting power". They therefore hoisted Hitler into the saddle. Today as well it is not the social prerequisites in West Germany which provide the soil for the NPD. A leading employee of a big firm whose opinion I asked, said, recalling his days in the Hitler Youth: "Let me tell you quite frankly that the principles of that time on the mental and physical training of youth still appeal to me today."

This tendency will be found among wide circles of the petty bourgeoisie in West Germany, where in part it is even considered as the "ideal". Under the cover of a "Christian state" even the creeping corruption and the stagnation of social development remain concealed from the perception of these people.

Racist propaganda, too, is once more gaining ground in West Germany. An example: an NPD politician such as Herr von Thadden can take the liberty of openly declaring that the foreign workers in West Germany today should be considered in the same way as the Jews were considered under the nazis. That is an outrageous impudence, but it is possible and inevitable because in that country the fascist past has not been overcome, militarism was not extirpated and former Hitler generals, who consider anti-communism as state policy, have been reinstated in their former positions. It is not surprising if the NPD is even held up as an advertisement for "democracy".

One no longer dares to speak in such a loud voice about the fact that the Communist Party of Germany was prohibited.

Not everybody could be expected to see through the web of mental confusion, demagoguery and defamation. Many are not aware of the anti-national character of this development and of its service to the cause of revanchism, as expressed above all by the feverish anxiety to lay hands on nuclear weapons. The practice of the NPD leaders of describing people who recognize the anti-national character of West German policy as "uninitiated" shows how primitive the political basis is.

There is widespread dissatisfaction among West German citizens, because every year thousands of millions are drained from the West German state budget to develop and maintain the German, American and British armed forces. This money could indeed be used for a better purpose.

The NPD seeks to make capital out of this for its own policy, as though there had never been a fascist regime in Germany. It chauvinistically states that this expenditure is necessary, because "the other side" has violated Germany, and the Germans are a "people without living space".

These revanchist slogans—including the demand for frontier revisions—form part of the official program of the NPD. At a meeting with young people, former Hitlerites represented the vile fascist conception of the "living spirit of the Germans", the "invincibility of the German soldiers" and the "struggle against internal and external enemies".

I think that these examples will suffice to show that the NPD is dangerous, not only because it is a collecting centre for incorrigibles, but because it is an exact copy of the former Hitler party. Its members, old and new fascists, today spread the same evil spirit

among the people as was done in the nineteen-thirties. There is only the one difference that "conditions in the Federal Republic" are being taken into account.

Even if the conditions in the Federal Republic are "respected" by the NPD and no storm-troops are set to rioting at sessions of parliament or to overthrowing the state, it is clear that this is only one of the various masks used by the fascists with a view to winning power.

"The First and Second World Wars and the cold war that followed are lost battles of the German bourgeoisie" was the recent comment of a West German publicist. One may add that in the following period West German imperialism, represented by the Adenauer and Strauss party, lost a number of further "battles".

The NPD is coming to the fore in this crisis. By coincidence? Who would believe that the 30,000 members of that party would have been able to finance the large-scale election campaign? No, they were carefully cultivated and nurtured by the CDU; this was the only way in which the NPD was able to develop as it did.

Naturally this "love's labour" was not performed for nothing by the chauvinist circles and the CDU/CSU leaders. Men like Adenauer and Strauss built up a basis for the Bonn policy. In this connection the words of the former minister of war and present Minister of Finance, Strauss, may be recalled:

"The NPD is an understandable national reaction to certain events of recent years." These words are not only inciting, they are dangerous, considering that the same Strauss in this connection complained about the long-lasting campaign conducted by circles abroad "against the Federal Republic" and the "German people".

Of course not everything the reactionaries in West Germany are aiming at will run as smoothly as these people imagine. I may recall that in recent years not only the "economic miracle", but also the "miracle" of CDU/CSU policy has run aground. It is good to be able to note that many people in West Germany are recognizing the mistakes and dangers in the development of their country and oppose it by demonstrations and other organized measures supported by the trade unions against the neo-fascist activities. The voice of the peace-loving patriotic forces is becoming stronger and is also to be heard in West German intellectual life.

It is true that resistance is as yet inadequate to check the fascist danger, but we are convinced that the circle of people standing up for peace and social security is not being reduced but is constantly increasing.

"Don't write anything bad about me," were Gustav's last words on parting. No—why bad? But I am, nevertheless, alarmed; there are ample grounds for my alarm.

For
World Peace VIII

It is only natural that the fraternal relations between the USSR and the GDR and the agreements on those relations should also provide for military cooperation. That is the result of the lessons which both peoples have drawn from history. No aggressor is ever again to be able to unleash a war, under no matter what pretext. The socialist achievements of the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic and those of the other socialist countries are inviolable.

The Soviet Army, the National People's Army of the GDR and the armed forces of all other states of the Warsaw Treaty (the armed forces of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania) give the necessary assurance of this. There is a close alliance and cooperation between them. This includes among other things the working out of unanimous conceptions of strategy and tactics, joint consultations on the construction and equipment of the armed forces, and exchanges of experience on the education and operational training of the armed forces. The highlights of their co-operation are the joint exercises and manoeuvres of the united armies.

The most important manoeuvre of the Warsaw Treaty armies up to now was "Moldau" in 1966, on the territory of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. The armed forces of the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, the GDR and Hungary took part in it. GDR military reporter Lieutenant Colonel Kurt Erhart was an eye witness. He is the author of the following reportage.

"Moldau" Reminiscences

They came across the Erzgebirge pass in long columns. A cloud of dust marked their trail. Young expectant faces look around from under their grey steel helmets. A cool autumn wind sweeps over the crest of the mountains. They wonder how they will be received in the valley below.

A sign-post marked "Nejdek, 3"; another three kilometres, and then they will know.

The first buildings on Czechoslovak territory, scattered over the yellowish slope appeared lonely and remote, yet in fact they do not stand aloof from the things happening around them. Little flags were waving from the flower-boxes among clusters of geraniums. Telegraph masts were girded with garlands, and signboards inscribed with the Czech words of welcome "Vitame vás" awaited the men descending to the valley. "So they will give us a friendly welcome," says one. "Why not? Are we coming as conquerors or as friends?" was the reply.

The lead vehicle came to a halt. A rest? Yes, a forced rest. Nejdek is opening its doors to the soldiers of the National People's Army of the German Democratic Republic. The inhabitants of Nejdek are opening their hearts. Flowers, greetings, calls, presents—they would need ten pairs of hands to reply to all the greetings. Bread and salt are offered according to old Slav custom. Those who receive it are considered like their own sons.

Like their own sons . . . those words have to be repeated in order to understand their deeper meaning. German soldiers are being embraced by people who had been tortured and downtrodden in the name of Germany. But those arriving in 1966 in armoured cars and with automatic pistols and guns are not identical with those who came before, nor with those who today cry out for frontier revisions and prattle about so-called "Sudeten German rights". Those fraternally welcomed in Nejdek, Ostrov, Cheb, Pisek and elsewhere in Bohemia are friends, brothers in arms, who did not come as conquerors—but who conquered the hearts of the inhabitants of Bohemia.

"It would be best if you got into my vehicle," Czechoslovak Captain Probok said to me, the GDR reporter, "from here you can clearly follow the operation. You will also have an opportunity to hear the different commands over the radio." Who would refuse such an offer? I lost no time in getting into his armoured command car.

We were joined by other guests, referees of the Czechoslovak army. We were somewhat crowded, but Jarko, one of the referees had a good idea: "Let's sit on top," he said. His radio operator installed his instrument between a tool-box and a rolled-up tarpaulin, with the referee and the reporter beside it. A click in the hood of the armoured car and I switched on reception. "Attention! Attention! Start motors!"

The command had hardly been issued when the powerful engine began to roar.

The word: "Forward!" by the battalion commander was drowned by a detonation and the red signal rocket slowly fell to the ground. The main thing at that moment was to find a firm hold. With jolts and swings the tracked vehicle got into motion. To the right and left the T 54 tanks of Soviet make came out into the open. The column of the company was advancing towards the "enemy". Here and there the referee spoke to the head umpire, reporting on the exact time and position.

We quickly became accustomed to the thundering noise. The only thing of importance at that moment was the way in which our side was advancing into the attack, how the motorized riflemen would act and where the second detachment was.

The tanks were in full advance. Imitated shell-hits exploded. Before us a cutting-off position with powerful anti-tank defences. Commands fly through the atmosphere, fol-

lowed by the booming of guns. The rattle of automatic pistols and machine guns supplemented the "melody".

Suddenly the calm Czechoslovak captain became excited. A glance at the watch; the second detachment was beginning to attack, precisely on time. With satisfaction he registered the efficient coordination of our forces and made his report. The cutting-off position was broken through and the riflemen mounted the moving vehicles.

Further ahead! An encounter with Soviet tank units lay ahead. Clouds of dust a few metres ahead announced the approaching tanks. One volley after another burst forth from the guns on both sides and the battalion commander spoke into his laryngophone: "Left flank faster! Faster!" The tanks were drawing closer and closer, the last detonation, the smoke drew off, and the Soviet and GDR tanks moved past one another.

The soldiers exchanged greetings, knowing that they were on opposite sides only in this manoeuvre, but in a serious fight they would stand firmly together on one side.

What was that sergeant feeling like, observers were wondering, as a Soviet tank had a break in his chain barely 100 metres from an AN 12 transport aircraft which had just landed. The commander Yuri Lebedev had no time for contemplation. His tank was blocking the way of the heavy vehicles. The regulators quickly recognized the situation and safely directed the vehicles to a by-pass.

In feverish haste Yuri and his comrades replaced the broken parts of the chain, with sweat trickling from under their caps as the beats of the hammer thudded in quick sequence.

It took no more than twelve minutes before the engine of the airborne tank roared up again and the tank drove rapidly off to catch up with the rest of the unit.

Two days later we again came across the Soviet soldiers at a friendship meeting. "Well, how was it? What did the commander say?"

"What should he say," replied the tankmen with the blue shoulder insignia, "it was a minor defect. A break in the chain could happen in any battle. The only thing to do in a case like that is to repair it as quickly as possible. You might say that we practised this eventuality as part of the game!"

That was true not only of the men of that airborne tank. In this most important manoeuvre of the Warsaw Treaty allies up to date, the joint action of the socialist armies, their coordinated military operation was practised in every respect. United by the ideas of the struggle for peace, they devoted their energies, skill and the most modern military potential to the service of peace in their way. In each phase of the manoeuvre it became evident with renewed emphasis that these armies, linked in close friendship

and joint action are invincible. Their uniform training, the standardized Soviet armament, their firm comradeship in arms are factors of their irresistible strength.

Once again it became evident that those allied with the Soviet Union and its army were on the side of the stronger battalions. This manoeuvre of course threatened no one, but it was nevertheless a warning against all aggressive designs and against attempts at unleashing a war in Europe, a warning above all to all those in the West German Federal Republic who continue to stir up trouble, who are greedy for atomic arms and who want frontier revisions. The population of Czechoslovakia and the soldiers of the four armies were unanimous in this.

The farmers of a large cooperative farm named "Breakthrough", invited soldiers of all four armies. "A hearty welcome to you boys in our village," the chairman greeted the guests. "You have ended the manoeuvre and tomorrow there will be a parade. You will be demonstrating the efficient military technology of our armed forces. But we, too, can offer a parade to you." At a signal from the chairman a column of tractors, trucks, combine harvesters and other harvesting machines was set in motion. The drivers proudly drove their machines around the village square. They were accompanied by the applause of the soldiers.

In the evening there was great merry-making. The hosts were virtually showering presents upon the soldiers. Amidst noise and gaiety—there was an orchestra, couples dancing and people singing at different tables—we, Czechoslovak, Soviet and German soldiers were sitting together with the headmaster of the local secondary school, engrossed in serious conversation.

Jiří Svoboda was one of those Czech patriots who had resolutely said "no" to the betrayal by the bourgeoisie and to fascism. That is why the nazis had locked him up for two years in the dark and in chains. Afterwards they had taken him to Dachau concentration camp.

He told us about all this in a calm and objective manner. And when he appealed to us to make every conceivable effort to prevent any further repetition of war and all its horrors, tears came to his eyes. He took a Soviet soldier in his arms, stroked the head of a very young Czechoslovak corporal and embraced the nearest GDR soldier with the same cordiality.

We left the hall. Outside there were jokes and laughter. Jiří pointed to the house of culture, the village green, the still unplastered new buildings and said: "All this must never be allowed to fall victim of a war." No, friend, that must not and shall not be. That is what we are jointly standing on guard to prevent.

In the following contribution Army General A. Yepishev, chief of the central political administration of the army and navy of the USSR, describes the main stages in the development of the Soviet Army and the armed forces of its allies. He points out the power and invincibility of the fraternal socialist armies protecting peace.

The Reliable Protection of the Achievements of the October Revolution

The Soviet Army, formed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under the leadership of Lenin, has covered a heroic road, honourably passing all tests. Its soldiers won immortal glory on the battlefields of the Civil War and the Great Patriotic War. The heroic deeds of the courageous sons of our country will be a radiant example for many generations.

The young Soviet Army emerged victoriously from the years of the Civil War and the struggles against the united forces of imperialist intervention and national counter-revolutionary units. It dealt a decisive blow to international reaction in its first attempt to wipe out the young Soviet workers' and peasants' state by military force.

In the Great Patriotic War the Soviet people and their armed forces shattered the fascist German invader in a difficult and bitter struggle, frustrating their plans to turn back the wheel of history by military force, destroy the Soviet Union and strangle the revolutionary communist working class movement and the national liberation struggle of the peoples.

Our victory was forged in bloody struggles, in days of strenuous work. The fighters of the Soviet Army, backed by the entire people, entered many outstanding, unforgotten pages in the chronicle of the Great Patriotic War. Progressive mankind cherishes with profound respect the memory of the heroic feats of the defenders of Brest, the historic battles of Moscow and Stalingrad, the heroic defence of Leningrad and Odessa, Kiev and Sevastopol, the great battles of Kursk and on the Dnieper, in the Ukraine, in Moldavia and the Baltic countries and the ultimate defeat of the fascist armies in the battle of Berlin.

The defeat of the powerful and dangerous enemy demonstrated the invincibility of the Soviet state to the whole world. The last war confirmed the correctness of Lenin's words that never will a people be vanquished the majority of whose workers and peasants have recognized, feel and see that they are defending their power, the power of the working people, that they are defending a cause the triumph of which will guarantee

to them and their children the benefit of all cultural values, all creations of human labour.

The decisive contribution to the defeat of fascist Germany and militarist Japan was made during the Second World War by the Soviet Army. In this way not only the freedom and independence of the Soviet Union were guaranteed, but the peoples of Europe and Asia were given every possible assistance in their endeavour to cast off the fetters of subjugation. Thus the road to a democratic development had been cleared for those peoples.

The Soviet people will never forget the Polish, Yugoslav and Czechoslovak troops who took a glorious road of struggle and made their contribution to the common cause. The armies of Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary also contributed to the common cause. Fighters of the Mongolian People's Republic fought side by side with the Soviet Army in the battles against the armed forces of imperialist Japan in the Far East. The peoples of China, Vietnam, Korea and other countries of Asia conducted a selfless struggle against the Japanese militarists.

The democratic forces of the occupied countries of Europe, led by the communists, displayed great courage and steadfastness in the struggle against German fascism. The Soviet people honour the peoples of all countries who participated in the common struggle against Hitler Germany and imperialist Japan.

The relation of forces in the world has fundamentally changed as a result of the victory of the Soviet Union in the Great Patriotic War. This victory promoted the creation of a socialist system in the world, a powerful upsurge of the revolutionary communist working-class movements in the capitalist countries, and a rapid strengthening of the national liberation movement in the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Socialism has extended beyond the frontiers of our country; it has expanded into a powerful world system, which at the present time constitutes the most important revolutionary force and thus the most reliable support of all peoples fighting for peace, national liberation, democracy and socialism.

The consequences to be drawn from the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War as a whole are an unambiguous warning to all military adventurers.

The foreign policy of the USSR is actively and consistently built in accordance with Leninist principles. This peaceful foreign policy of the USSR and of all the other socialist countries is confronted with the aggressive and adventurous course followed by the USA and the other imperialist countries, directed towards increasing international tension and the preparation of a nuclear war.

American imperialism is at present the most reactionary force, acting as world gendarme. Assuming the role of "saviour" of the capitalist system, the representatives of US economic power and finance capital are striving to unify the forces of imperialism on a basis of anti-communism, extend and consolidate the aggressive military alliances directed against the USSR and the other socialist countries.

In that endeavour the American imperialists ruthlessly violate the sovereignty of other peoples and conduct military interventions in the internal affairs of other countries. They even go as far as to send out units of their navy, air force and airborne troops to countries which refuse to bow to their will. The organization of coups d'état forms a part of their methods.

Great alarm and anxiety among the peoples are called forth by the situation in Asia, above all in Indochina, where a large army of the USA—equipped with the latest means of warfare and supported by the navy and air force—is conducting extensive military operations against the patriots of South Vietnam fighting for the freedom and independence of their country.

The US air force is attacking towns and villages of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, in violation of international law, dropping bombs on densely populated areas of the capital of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam—Hanoi—and on residential areas of Laos and Cambodia.

American imperialism today considers Vietnam as a testing ground to measure its forces with those of the world socialist system; at the same time Vietnam has thus been made the focal point of the national liberation movements of all peoples.

The criminal intervention of American imperialism is today being decisively condemned not only by the peoples of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, but by the whole of progressive mankind. In accordance with its international obligations, the Soviet Union has up to the present given all-sided support to the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against the criminal aggression of US imperialism, and will continue to do so in the future.

In Europe as well, peace is in danger. The source of this danger is West Germany, where the forces of militarism have again raised their heads and where revanchism has been declared state policy. In that country people are at work to promote disastrous measures such as frontier revisions, the elimination of the German Democratic Republic, the splitting off of Polish and Soviet territories, the annulment of the Oder-Neisse frontier and even the annexation of territories in Czechoslovakia.

As a result of a policy directed towards the militarization of the country and con-

ducted with the assistance of the American partner, the West German Bundeswehr is growing and consolidating as the main support of NATO. The West German government is striving in every way to obtain nuclear weapons, and is supported in this by certain circles in the USA, Great Britain and other imperialist countries.

In contrast to these aggressive efforts of West German militarism the German Democratic Republic is conducting a policy of peace. It is thus making an important contribution to security in Europe.

In this connection it is necessary to appreciate the significance of the Warsaw Treaty, concluded by the socialist states of Europe to ensure mutual support and assistance to each other.

They have thereby confronted the increasing danger of imperialist aggression with a united front for peace, security and international relaxation in Europe. This treaty guarantees the inviolability of the frontiers of the socialist states in Europe, and the checking of aggressive attempts by American and West German imperialism.

It may be stated with satisfaction that the signatories of the Warsaw Treaty are continuously seeking to improve the cooperation between their armed forces in such a way as to attain a perfect continuity of theory and practice in modern warfare.

The joint "October Storm" and "Moldau" manoeuvres in 1965 and 1966 may be mentioned as convincing examples in this connection. Those two manoeuvres, conducted on the territories of the GDR and Czechoslovakia proved that the fraternal armed forces have attained a high degree of perfection in the mastery of modern fighting techniques and absolute readiness for action.

In conceiving their aggressive policy the imperialist circles of the western countries are counting on taking advantage of differences of opinion within the international communist movement. They seek for the most diverse ways of stirring up differences among the socialist countries and of undermining the unity of the socialist states.

Those attempts are not only a self-delusion; they are futile. The constant consolidation of the friendship and fraternal cooperation of the communist parties of the socialist countries on the basis of Marxism-Leninism is a systematic process which can never be held up by anyone.

The government of the Soviet Union, led by the Communist Party, is constantly taking steps to increase the defence potential of the USSR and to strengthen the operational efficiency of its armed forces. The decisions of the Twenty-Third Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union underlined that under the conditions of the intensification of international tension by the aggressive forces of imperialism and the formation

of centres of war, the CPSU will continue to intensify the vigilance of the Soviet people and the defensive power of the USSR, so that the forces of the Soviet Union are at all times prepared to defend the achievements of socialism and deal an annihilating blow to any aggressor.

The successes in the sphere of economic development, in the development of science and technology were the prerequisite for the equipment of the Soviet Army with first-class weapons. The development of strategic rocket units was, of course, made the object of special attention. At the same time the necessary improvement of other types of weapons was also continued.

The power of the Soviet armed forces is not only based on its equipment which is of the latest technical standards. The ranks of that army include excellent cadres, who are unreservedly devoted to the aims of the party and the people and who are in a position to handle modern means of warfare with perfection. They will always make every endeavour to fulfil their patriotic and international obligations.

At present one out of every four army and naval officers has a higher military education or a special college education. More than half of all officers are militarily trained engineers and technicians. The army and navy officers are characterized by their great mastery of military science, by a wealth of experience in the training and education of members of the armed forces; they lead the units of the forces with great skill and knowledge.

Every year the armed forces are joined by young people with an ever higher standard of moral, cultural, technical and physical preparation. Whereas before the war approximately 35 per cent of all conscripts had a college, secondary or polytechnical education, this proportion now amounts to 90 per cent. Many of those young people have a completed technical vocational training.

The members of the armed forces and the entire Soviet people associate their successes and achievements, their plans for the future, directly with the activities of the Communist Party and its Leninist Central Committee. Party leadership constitutes the inexhaustible source of the strength and invincibility of the Soviet Army, guaranteeing that it will continue in the future to offer a reliable protection to the socialist motherland, a support of peace, democracy and socialism.

The peoples and armies of the fraternal socialist countries stand shoulder to shoulder in the protection of the revolutionary achievements. Their military cooperation, based on the common interests and the unity of the socialist system born in the struggle against the common enemy, is constantly developing.

The struggle for peace must be conducted at all times and in every sphere. The Soviet Union and the GDR adhere to this principle. Both countries in particular consider it to be their sacred duty to contribute with all their power to banning for ever the danger of nuclear war, that scourge of mankind. Cläre Einhorn, correspondent in Geneva of the General German News Agency (ADN) reports on the responsible work of the Soviet delegation at the 18-Nation Disarmament Commission, which is actively supported by the GDR.

Joint Action Against Atomic War

All those who personally had to experience the Hitler aggression and who saw how in the name of Germany the fascist hordes fell upon the peoples of Europe and invaded the peaceful Soviet Union will be filled with satisfaction to know that today the German Democratic Republic stands at the side of the USSR in the struggle to prevent an even more terrible war with nuclear weapons.

One of the international bodies in which the united struggle for peace is being expressed with increasing emphasis is the 18-Nation Disarmament Commission, which since 1962 has been meeting every year in Geneva.

Proposals advanced by the GDR for the renunciation of nuclear weapons by both German states are meeting with a broader response every year—in contrast to the unrestrained demands raised by the West German Federal Republic for access to nuclear weapons.

In 1966 representatives of five socialist, eight non-aligned and four capitalist states had gathered for the fifth round of disarmament talks around the semi-circular green table in the Council Hall of the Palace of Nations in Geneva. The chair of France remained unoccupied from the beginning. At front the two co-chairmen of the commission had taken their places—Semyon Konstantinovich Zarapkin, for many years the Soviet representative for disarmament, and the American expert William C. Foster.

At almost every session the representatives of the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Rumania warn the commission members against the approaching danger threatening Europe 20 years after the end of the last war. The war policy conducted by the strategists of nuclear war in Bonn are countered by the proposals advanced by the GDR for relaxation in Europe. The renunciation of nuclear weapons by both German states, they repeatedly emphasize, would clear the road towards the important agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in every form.

The consultations take place twice a week. They are not conducted in public. Yet as soon as the doors of the hall are opened on the conclusion of a session, the same scene is repeated each time—the Soviet delegation is immediately surrounded by press reporters from east and west. Everyone is eager to hear the voice of the USSR, which can look back on fifty years of consistent peace policy.

The apt replies by Zharapkin fascinate even the most hardboiled western journalists. It is acknowledged with attention and earnestness that the USSR—today the most powerful peace factor in the world—will never agree that nuclear weapons should be made accessible to the West German nuclear war strategists. The USSR, as S. Zharapkin and A. A. Roshchin have repeatedly said, would constantly be on guard to ensure that Europe should be spared the horrors of a nuclear inferno for all time.

As yet the GDR has no opportunity to participate directly in the consultations of the United Nations. The voice of the first German peace state, however, may be heard wherever there is a struggle in defence of peace and European security.

Even in 1950 the GDR had proposed bilateral steps, measures and obligations with respect to military status to the West German government. At that time it had suggested reaching understanding on the numerical strength, armament and stationing of the police forces of the two German states and on the military neutrality of Germany.

In 1956 and 1957, when the efforts of the West German government to obtain nuclear weapons were becoming increasingly marked, the GDR advanced proposals with a view to preventing the production and storage of nuclear arms on German territory. It supported the proposals of the USSR and those of the other socialist states envisaging the establishment of a zone of limited armament in Central Europe and the Polish plan for the creation of an atomic-weapon-free zone in Central Europe.

In 1959 the GDR proposed the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the two German states. At the same time it supported the proposal advanced by the USSR and other socialist states for the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the states of NATO and those of the Warsaw Treaty. The GDR seconded the proposal of the Soviet Union for the renunciation of the use of force in the settlement of territorial controversies.

In support of the Soviet proposals on general and complete disarmament the German Democratic Republic advanced proposals to the United Nations in 1960 on the step-by-step disarmament of the two German states. From the beginning the GDR actively supported the work of the 18-Nation Disarmament Commission and in 1963 it was one of the first states to sign the agreement on the prohibition of nuclear arms tests in the

atmosphere, cosmic space and under water. The Chairman of the GDR Council of State in 1964 addressed two letters to West German Federal Chancellor Erhard advancing proposals for an agreement between the two German states on the comprehensive renunciation of nuclear weapons.

In February 1964, August 1965 and February 1966 a delegation of the GDR government headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Georg Stibi was in Geneva. It declared to the 18-Nation Disarmament Commission the GDR's readiness to take over a binding pledge to renounce nuclear weapons provided the West German Federal Republic was willing to do likewise.

The declaration was conveyed to the members of the Commission. The Soviet co-chairman read out the GDR Memorandum to the Commission and arranged its circulation as an official UN document. At the same time he endorsed the declaration on behalf of the USSR. At the session of the Commission he made the following statement in this connection:

"Gentlemen! The declaration of the GDR government which I have just read shows that there are two German states with different policies; whereas the government of the Federal Republic of Germany is striving to obtain access to nuclear weapons in one form or another, the GDR government calls for the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This declaration constitutes a further important contribution of the GDR to the solution of one of the most urgent international problems—the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union and the Soviet people," Zarakin stressed, "appreciate the efforts being undertaken by the population and government of the German Democratic Republic with a view to normalizing and cleansing the situation in Europe. They appreciate the resistance to the aggressive aspirations of the West German revanchists. By means of its active foreign policy directed against the forces of aggression and militarism the GDR is fulfilling the hard but responsible and noble mission of struggle for the safeguarding of peace and security in Central Europe and in the whole world, placed upon it by history."

As GDR correspondent in Geneva I witnessed how press reporters hastened to the spot, besieged Ambassador Zarakin and Minister Stibi after the handing over of the GDR Memorandum at the official building of the Soviet delegation. The journalists were eager to hear directly from the GDR deputy foreign minister the position taken by the GDR. With great interest they acknowledged the evidence substantiating the fact that the attempt by West Germany to obtain possession of nuclear arms by way of a multilateral atomic force of NATO had been frustrated by the resolute attitude of the

USSR and all other forces of peace. The GDR for its part was supporting concrete steps by both German states to renounce nuclear weapons and safeguard peace in Europe.

Asked for his opinion, the head of the Soviet delegation fully supported the statement by Georg Stibi. The unanimous attitude of the statesmen of the USSR and the GDR made a deep impression on the journalist from many countries.

The symbolic significance of that moment was evident, bringing clearly to light the unanimity of the interests of both countries in the preservation of peace in Germany, Europe and the whole world.

The telephones never stopped ringing during the stay of the GDR government delegation at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva. Visits were arranged, interviews requested. The return visit of the Soviet delegation to the "Beau Rivage" hotel on the banks of beautiful Lake Lemman, where the GDR delegation stays during its visits to Geneva, offered a renewed opportunity for a lively exchange of views between the two delegations. Visits and return visits by other experts of the Disarmament Commission as well as leading UN officials at the Palace of Nations followed. On all occasions the unanimity of the politicians of the various countries with the GDR proposals for relaxation was expressed. There is in fact no one who wants to see West Germany in the possession of nuclear weapons.

The influential French news agency AFP, the Japanese radio and television, the Soviet news agency TASS and the Middle East news service MEN did not miss the opportunity of presenting the GDR point of view on disarmament in Europe in exclusive interviews. Whereas three years ago only brief information had been issued about the presence of a GDR government delegation in Geneva, internationally respected Swiss papers such as *Journal de Genève*, *Tribune de Genève*, *Gazette de Lausanne*, and *Basler Nationalzeitung* devoted much space to the realistic point of view of the GDR.

In view of the growing authority of the GDR in the international arena the West German provocations are becoming increasingly ineffective. The "Envoy Plenipotentiary for Disarmament", Schnippenkoetter, hastily sent off to Geneva from Bonn in February 1966 in connection with the GDR success, considered it appropriate to pack up his atomic war baggage and return prematurely to Bonn. He fearfully refused, in contrast to the other western representatives of the Commission, an invitation extended by the Soviet co-chairman to a reception also attended by the GDR government delegation. The GDR government delegation stayed on, its members were in great demand as conversation partners at the international reception among the attending diplomats and press representatives.

The first German workers' and farmers' state is consistently following its peace policy, together with the USSR, the socialist states and all peace-loving forces in the world.

The US aggression in Vietnam and its support by the West German Federal Republic are a serious danger to world peace. The Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic agree with all peace-loving people in considering the murderous war of extermination against the patriots of South Vietnam fighting for their freedom, and the bomb war against women and children in North Vietnam to be crimes. The Americans and their associates have no business in Vietnam! The Soviet Union and the GDR, faithful to the principles of socialist internationalism, stand by the side of the brother people of Vietnam, giving effective assistance to them.

E. Kobelev, correspondent of the Soviet news agency TASS in Hanoi wrote:

The Passionate Heart of Vietnam

A narrow path winds through the rice fields like a yellow band; in part it is covered by oily, muddy water. Immediately ahead of us there is a small village, and another one lies directly beyond it. Our car passes high towering anti-aircraft guns surrounded by earthen walls. These guns with their long range not only protect the surrounding villages but also important objectives in the vicinity.

Suddenly the roar of jet-fighters is heard above our heads; for the first time in these war years the heart does not almost stop at this sound. We can distinctly make out the red star on the wings of the aircraft. The anti-aircraft defence is silent, passing vehicles make no attempt to hide under trees, two peasant women, balancing burdens on their shoulders, calmly continue on their way. "They're ours," the driver calls with a feeling of relief, joy and admiration. He has undoubtedly experienced more than one bombing attack in his life.

It is not far to the airport. We meet people in military uniform ever more frequently. Our documents are checked at the barrier and then we may pass on, into the prohibited zone.

On 3 April 1966 the American air force carried out a large-scale air-raid on the railway bridges of the Than-Hoa district. A total of 150 jet fighters had participated in the operation. That day we were a few kilometres south of Than-Hoa. In one wave after another the "F-105s" menacingly thundered above our heads towards the north.

Throughout the whole morning we could hear the detonations of bombs and the noise of anti-aircraft artillery. That evening we were told that in this air-raid Vietnamese aircraft had been in operation for the first time. The first bitter fights in the air with American aircraft took place when the enemy bombed bridges in the region of Ninh-Binh, about 80 kilometres from Hanoi. Vietnamese planes shot down two American F-105s.

And then we arrived at the military airport, from which the Vietnamese fighter squadron regularly took off for its operations. Our car stopped outside the club house as a group of people in military uniforms were just coming out of the building, engrossed in a heated discussion. At the entrance to the club a large poster announced: "Today we are showing the Soviet feature film 'Men and Beasts'."

We came across Deputy Commander Tran-Hanh. His face was familiar to me from the newspapers. He introduced his comrade, flight commander Cao-Thanh-Tin and flight control officer Pham-Ngoc-Lan. We shook hands. Cao-Thanh-Tin was called the "possessed flyer" by his friends. His home was situated in the reed-valley of South Vietnam. That is where his wife remained. His eight brothers and sisters had been tortured in the prison there and shot. "There are beasts everywhere," Cao-Thanh-Tin said, "but men are stronger than beasts, and in the hard struggle being fought at present man will be the conqueror." Cao-Thanh-Tin was one of the first Vietnamese airmen to have shot down one of the most perfect of aircraft, the "F-4 H". More of them have been brought down since then.

Tran-Hanh has "specialized" in shooting down jet fighters of the "F-105 D" type. The dates 4 April and 11 June are marked with a red circle in his notebook—meaning that on those days he had shot down two American aircraft in two air battles.

"Please convey to the Soviet people our profound gratitude for their generous internationalism and the fraternity shown to our people," Trans-Hanh said on parting.

The small island of Bach-Long-Vi, with an area of only three square kilometres has the appearance of the tail of a white dragon. It lies in the middle of the Gulf of Tonkin and is not even marked on a large-scale map. The greater is the fame which it has won these recent months. It far exceeds its physical dimensions. To the American aggressors this island has long been a thorn in the side.

Bach-Long-Vi is situated between the mainland and the aircraft carriers of the US Seventh Fleet. The defenders of the island are the first to encounter enemy aircraft approaching the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Children and old people were evacuated from the island, which was transformed into a fortress.

The beach, which is covered with fine grains of gleaming white sand is now cleft with trenches. Earth walls extend in all directions; anti-aircraft and machine guns are posted on the dunes. At night the fishermen go out for their regular catch and during the day they sit on guard in the trenches with the soldiers. The defenders on the island receive the American aircraft approaching in a vertical dive with a dense hail of lead. Several enemy bombers have been shot down by the heroic defenders of the island.

"The Americans hoped our small island could be made to disappear in the sea," said the commissar of a military detachment on the island, "but they failed. Our island is alive and dealing hard blows to the enemy."

A giant tortoise lives at the bottom of a lake in Hanoi named "Retrieved Sword". Its shell has a diameter of 1.5 metres. The inhabitants of Hanoi have sanctified it. On New Year's Day—the Vietnamese people celebrate the new year on 21 January—the ancient lake-inhabitant swam to the shore and attracted a crowd of spectators. What had induced it to go on land? Was it only to have a breath of fresh air?

Some inhabitants of Hanoi asserted that the tortoise had come out of the water to see whether Hanoi was preparing for the new year. According to tradition the new year celebrations are concentrated around the lake. But the country is in a state of war. Half the population of Hanoi has been evacuated. Although an armistice had been agreed upon the Americans carried on provocative flights across the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

On the day of celebrations bleak Hanoi underwent a transformation. The tops of the weeping willows, poplars and plane trees around the lake were illuminated. Garlands and traditional paper lanterns were suspended across the streets. In the evening people in festive attire gathered on the banks of the lake. It was cold and rainy. The air-raid shelters and trenches around the lake shore characterized the mood. The posters warning against the bombings and the constantly working machines of the factories of Hanoi also recalled the rhythm of ordinary daily life. This country, which became a victim of aggression could not afford to stop to celebrate. Not a minute's work must be lost was a decision of the workers.

But despite this unusual situation that day became a festive occasion. Just as in previous years the traditional fireworks exploded in the air. They went off not only for the inhabitants of Hanoi, but also for the population of Saigon; puppet Premier Ky had prohibited fireworks on New Year's eve. The Vietnamese love fireworks on that day. They would prefer it if only their harmless explosions were heard throughout the country.

The calendar years in Vietnam are given the names of animals. This 21 January introduced the Year of the Horse. In Vietnam the horse is symbolic of diligence and ambition. Those are qualities essential to the Vietnamese precisely in this year, for the American aggressor must be warded off.

The beginning of the new year was marked by the further consolidation of friendship between the Vietnamese and the Soviet people. A Soviet delegation headed by A. N. Shelepin, member of the Presidium and Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU visited the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Many impressions of the Soviet delegation in Hanoi during their visit are written down in my notebook. "During the struggle against the French colonialists Vietnamese communists went to the gallows or faced the execution squad with the words 'Long live the Soviet Union!' on their lips. Under that slogan we shall also defeat the American aggressor," said veteran worker Phan-thanh-Cao.

During the visit of the Soviet delegation there were expressions of friendship and solidarity everywhere; they were inscribed on streamers and posters decorating the town; they were in the first columns of the press; they were heard on radio Hanoi; they could be heard at meetings at the Polytechnical Institute, at an engineering factory and in the meeting hall of the National Assembly of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The most impatient people crowded around the newspaper stands at five o'clock in the morning to obtain the latest news about the delegation and its talks.

The Soviet people in the streets of Hanoi were met with a warm smile by the inhabitants of the town. Their faces not only reflected affection and admiration towards the Soviet people, but also pride in the inviolable friendship between the two peoples.

Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong aptly described the emotions in the hearts of Vietnamese people, when at a meeting at the Polytechnical Institute he said: "We have gathered here to welcome representatives of the CPSU, representatives of the Soviet people and the Soviet government. We want to show them our feelings, our affection, admiration and gratitude. Our love goes out to the country of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the first country in the world to launch the work of socialist construction. Our revolutionary enthusiasm, our emotions and our relations with the Soviet people constitute an indivisible whole. My thoughts are shared by the entire Vietnamese people, by every Vietnamese."

The Vietnamese press stated in conclusion that this visit had taken place in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual confidence. The fact of the signing of a new agreement on additional assistance by the Soviet Union was emphasized as assuming

a particular significance. The heroic Vietnamese people are aware of the extensive aid rendered by the Soviet Union and fully appreciate it.

“Heart-felt gratitude to the Soviet people for their aid to our people in the struggle against the American aggressor”—these words are inscribed on posters at factories, in work halls and military units. They testify to the gratitude felt towards the Soviet people. They also give evidence of the firm confidence of the Vietnamese in the ultimate triumph of their just cause.

The Berlin journalist Horst Szeponik commented on the support given to the Vietnamese people by the GDR:

Solidarity Has Many Names

The road along Dragon Bay took us to the north, past the glittering green sea with clusters of countless overgrown rocky islands for the most part exclusively inhabited by monkeys. Fishing boats glide by. To the left extends the tropical forest out of which mountains covered by dense jungle emerge. In these parts they not only enhance the landscape but also contain abundant treasures.

Arriving at Cam-pha we had to wade through coal dust for the last part of the journey to the top of the mountains. A vast basin opened up before us—the partly excavated mountain. The most valuable kind of coal in the world—anthracite—is mined here in open-cast working. Serpentine paths formed a winding entrance to the interior of the mountain. The installations, the heavy tippers and trucks were for the most part marked in Cyrillic letters—“СССР”. Apart from the Soviet Union, mining equipment is also supplied by Czechoslovakia, Poland and the GDR; the GDR delivers above all measuring instruments. The Cam-pha mine is eloquent testimony of the solidarity and aid of the socialist countries to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in its construction and industrialization.

On many occasions I was able to note the good repute of the German Democratic Republic in the fraternal socialist country 10,000 kilometres away. Doctors and nurses are full of praise for the hospital of German-Vietnamese friendship; rice-farmers appreciate the quality of motor pumps from the GDR; bicycle owners praise their mounts from Sangerhausen, and the inhabitants of Haiphong received the largest and most

modern glass works in South East Asia as a gift from the German Democratic Republic . . .

The solidarity of our citizens with that country in South East Asia has strengthened since the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was attacked by American bombers. Up to the end of 1966 over 18 million marks had been paid in to the Fighting Fund of the Vietnam sub-committee of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee under account number 99 999. Those funds have been used to send several consignments of goods by sea and by air to aid the people of Vietnam in their heroic fight.

The scale of goods purchased with the donations is very wide. It ranges from woollen blankets to diesel engines and ambulances. DRV Minister of Health Pham Ngoc Thach stated: "The material assistance of the GDR is particularly perceptible in the health service. Nearly all the medical equipment, instruments and drugs that we use come from the GDR. The blood sent helped us to save the lives of many citizens, mostly women and children who had been severely injured by bomb splinters."

The most important means of transportation in Vietnam is the bicycle, it does not need a made-up road and is particularly useful on narrow paths. The Writers' Union of the GDR sponsored a campaign of solidarity under the slogan: "1,000 Bicycles for Vietnam" which were sent to Hanoi at the end of last year. Even earlier, at the beginning of 1966—the Vietnam Committee had bought 5,000 bicycles with money donated and sent them to Hanoi. These bicycles enjoy a particular popularity among the Vietnamese people because of their excellent construction which is adapted to the conditions of the country. They have a reinforced frame and can be used to transport loads of up to five or six hundredweight in large baskets suspended from both sides of the frame.

The Confederation of Free German Trade Unions sent the Vietnamese Trade Union Federation goods and materials to a total value of about seven million marks. But these sums by no means indicate the whole extent of the solidarity campaign. Trade unionists of the TAKRAF Association of Nationally-Owned Industries donated an automatic rotary crane valued at 76,000 marks as their solidarity gift. The motor workers of Ludwigsfelde constructed a truck of the W 50 type for Vietnam and the workers of the machine tool factory in Plauen supplied 15 drilling machines especially constructed for use under tropical conditions. Solidarity for Vietnam in the GDR has many names and many addresses . . .

These solidarity actions, brought forth by the spirit of proletarian internationalism, also include assistance in the sphere of training cadres for the young economy of the country. At the end of 1966 more than 200 girls and boys from the DRV arrived in the

GDR to study in this country. After having learned the German language, they will be trained at technical colleges and universities, particularly in the field of transport and communications, chemistry, mining and metallurgy. The GDR furthermore pledged itself to give 2,500 young Vietnamese a vocational training in this country. They will learn the German language and then be trained for two or three years in GDR factories.

At the same time that the population of the GDR is giving fraternal aid to the people of Vietnam fighting for their freedom and independence, the West German government is giving the utmost military, political and economic support to the American aggressors and their South Vietnamese puppets. Apart from deliveries of war materials probably exceeding 100 million marks in 1967 and totalling approximately 533 million marks from 1960 to 1964, war credits totalling over 250 million marks have so far been granted. These sums are, among other things, being used for the construction of an integrated chemical works of military importance, which will produce toxic substances. The West German militarists demand in return the opportunity to participate in developments of military technology.

The role once played by the German Condor Legion (fascist German air force units, notorious for their brutal bombing of the civilian population—editor) in the Spanish Civil War has been taken over by West German mercenaries today, furnished with American passports to delude public opinion. According to western sources, 120 members of the West German air force are said to be involved in the savage bombing of the civilian population. An unknown number of West German mercenaries have already been killed in action.

If the word “Duc” (German) still has a good name among many Vietnamese, then this is due to the influence of the new, the other Germany, due to the solidarity shown by the population of the German Democratic Republic, which is giving the Vietnamese people effective support in their just struggle.

The only state on German territory which unswervingly and resolutely worked and works for relaxation, peace and security is the German Democratic Republic. In close alliance with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries it strengthened and acquired international respect and recognition and friends all over the world. The fraternal relations between the USSR and the GDR, the inseparable community of the two countries have become a decisive factor in the development of Europe and the world.

These historic facts were duly appreciated at the Seventh Congress of the Socialist

Unity Party of Germany in April 1967. In his speech to the Congress Walter Ulbricht, First Secretary of the leading party of the GDR and Chairman of the Council of State, stated among other things:

Fraternally Linked with the Soviet Union for Peace and Security

Indeed, the October Revolution introduced the new socialist age of mankind. Many peoples, including the German people in the German Democratic Republic, have since taken the road of socialism . . . And we are happy that we Germans in the GDR have long been part of the great family of socialist nations and that we are able to contribute our share to the world-wide results of the October Revolution with the successes of our socialist construction . . .

The safeguarding of peaceful coexistence on the basis of the status quo, i.e., above all on the basis of the recognition of all existing frontiers and of historically evolved realities, is increasingly moving into the foreground of interest.

It has been proved, particularly in Europe, that the policy of "roll back" devised by former US Secretary of State Dulles, the rolling-back^o of the socialist countries with the aid of military force or nuclear coercion cannot be applied. The development of the relation of forces in favour of socialism—in particular the increased defensive power of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty states—have manifested the hopelessness of the military plans for Europe of the American and West German imperialists. The economic and political growth of the socialist countries and the successes of the policy of peaceful coexistence between countries with different social systems pursued by them, have to a considerable extent further stabilized the situation in Europe. The assertion of the NATO strategists, that the danger of war emanates from the socialist states of Europe has been completely invalidated. These developments, as well as the aspirations of several important NATO partners to withdraw from the sphere of irksome and dangerous tutelage of the USA, resulted in a serious shaking of the NATO military alliance.

The foreign policy of the GDR is that of a peace-loving, sovereign, internally and externally stable socialist German state. That state is aware of its historic mission as a German peace state and of its responsibility for the triumph of socialism and the safeguarding of peace in Europe.

The foreign policy of the German Democratic Republic is firmly directed towards

close and friendly cooperation with the state of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Soviet Union, and with the other fraternally allied members of the great socialist family of states, particularly the states of the Warsaw Treaty.

The strengthening of the political and ideological unity and cooperation of the Marxist-Leninist parties and the socialist states remains an essential task of the policy of our party and of our socialist state. That, as we know, is also the policy followed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the government of the USSR. We are happy to be able to state that the large majority of the socialist countries and communist and workers' parties hold high the banner of political and ideological unity and cooperation in the face of all attempts at disruption and diversion.

The constant consolidation of cooperation between the Warsaw Treaty states constitutes a further main task of our foreign policy. The joint ideology of Marxism-Leninism, the joint consistent striving for the safeguarding of peace, the identity of our interest in security, close economic cooperation and division of labour form inseparable links between us. We are determined to promote to the utmost extent the consolidation of the Warsaw Treaty states and the many-sided bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria.

An important part of the struggle of the socialist states for European security is the promotion of recognition of the fact that the inclusion of the GDR in the system of European security on a basis of equality is indispensable and that this corresponds to the vital interests of all peace-loving peoples of Europe including the population of the West German Federal Republic.

The German Democratic Republic, as the first democratic state of peace and socialism on German soil has learnt the lesson taught by two world wars; this attitude is in accord with the spirit of the anti-Hitler coalition and with the wishes of all peoples of Europe.

The GDR is conducting a policy of understanding, respect for the sovereignty and equality of other states, of non-interference in their internal affairs. In contrast to the other German state, which is continuing the imperialist traditions of the German Reich, the GDR follows a policy directed towards relaxation on the basis of the status quo, mutual respect for frontiers and laws. It is a decisive factor in frustrating the policy of revenge and hegemony conducted by Bonn, which is a threat to peace and security in Europe.

The speech delivered by Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was a high point in the events at the Seventh

Congress of the Socialist Unity Party. The representative of the Soviet people emphasized that friendship between the GDR and the USSR was constantly consolidating and strengthening, and that socialist construction in the GDR was inviolable.

The Future Belongs to the Heirs of the Great October

Within the shortest space of time democratic Germany did away with the burdensome heritage left by Hitlerism in the souls of people, in their minds and ethics, to say nothing of the elimination of the material roots of fascism, the domination of big monopolies which had fostered nazism.

The German Democratic Republic proclaimed peace for the German people, peace for all neighbours of Germany, peace for all peoples of the globe, the inviolability of European frontiers. The German Democratic Republic came to be one of the major factors in European security, a bulwark of peace in Europe. It has secured for itself firm positions in the international arena . . .

The policies of the two German states, first of all, concern the interests of Germans. But all other European peoples, too, cannot be indifferent as to what course is followed by each of these states. And since the ruling circles of West Germany followed the road of traditional policy of German imperialism, they should not be surprised that such a policy meets with a growing rebuff in the world arena, above all, in Europe . . .

Indeed, what do the facts show? The strengthening of the positions of the most belligerent imperialism, the restoration of its military might has been going on at a fast pace in West Germany in the course of twenty years. Throughout its existence the German Federal Republic has been claiming the territories of other countries, demanding the revision of borders in Europe, and claiming West Berlin, a city with a special status which has nothing to do with the Federal Republic.

In the course of all these years the West German rulers have been making an absolutely absurd claim by pretending that they represent "the entire German people".

This claim which, as is clear to everybody, has nothing to do with the real state of affairs, could probably be simply regarded as a joke were it not an expression of aggressiveness, an expression of encroachment on the sovereign rights and territory of the other German state, the peace-loving socialist state of German working people, the German Democratic Republic. And this is no joke, this is a factor creating a permanent serious threat to peace in Europe and in the whole world. For many years the leaders of

West Germany's state and military machine see one of their main aims in getting access for the Federal Republic in some form to the most powerful means of the mass annihilation of people, nuclear weapons . . .

All this created and creates obstacles in the road to the establishment of a system of European security, to an improvement in the political climate in Europe. It is not surprising after this that West Germany is regarded by world opinion as the main foe of peace and security in Europe . . .

The socialist countries of Europe are coming out for effective, honest normalization and development of political, economic and cultural contacts with all states, including the German Federal Republic, for the sake of peace and mutual benefit. But they will never agree to do so at the expense of their unity, at the expense of the interests of the socialist community as a whole, or individual countries belonging to it, especially, at the expense of the fraternal country, the German Democratic Republic.

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government have authorized me to declare once again from the rostrum of your Congress that the rights and interests of the German Democratic Republic, the interests of building socialism in your republic are just as close and dear to us as they are to you, comrades, and, if need be, we shall defend them firmly and resolutely with all our might! . . .

Dear comrades, from the very beginning of the existence of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and from the very establishment of the German Democratic Republic our parties and countries have been united by a close, profound and constantly strengthening fraternal friendship. It has embodied the dreams of the best sons of the peoples of our countries and we highly prize our joint historic gain. Our friendship is based on the community of our Marxist-Leninist ideology and the social system of our countries, the community of political and economic interests of our states and peoples, the identity of the aims of their historic advance along the road to communism.

State relations between the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union are based on the immutable foundation of the principles of socialist internationalism, on the Treaty on Friendship, Mutual Assistance and Cooperation between the USSR and the GDR, on the unswerving loyalty of both our countries to the Warsaw Treaty organization. It can now be said that our cooperation is rising to a qualitatively new stage. In the centre of our attention now are increasingly such problems as the coordination of the prospects of the development of the national economies of both countries, the development of specialization and industrial integration, that is, questions of the socialist division of labour on a long-term and scientifically-substantiated basis. Naturally, we

regard the cooperation between our two countries as a component part of the general system of international cooperation of all socialist states which are increasingly becoming an ever more important factor of their development . . .

Soviet communists and the entire Soviet people meet the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution with new successes in all fields of life, and we are glad that our friends in the fraternal countries, including those in the German Democratic Republic, are with us on the road to new achievements . . .

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